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Palestinians protest new army post in Hebron

HEBRON (AP) — Several dozen Palestinians staged a sit-in protest Tuesday in the West Bank town of Hebron against a new Israeli army outpost set up overnight on the roof of their apartment building. The Palestinians sitting on mattresses and chairs said they would not leave until the soldiers left. The army set up a post near the Jewish enclave of Beit Hadassah on the roof of a nearby Palestinian-owned building in the night from Monday to Tuesday. The army said that soon after soldiers moved into the new outpost, several shots were fired toward it from the nearby Palestinian-controlled area and several firebombs were thrown nearby toward an army patrol. The Israeli army withdrew to the centre of Hebron in January 1997 to allow for the expansion of Palestinian autonomy in 85 per cent of the city.

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AMMAN WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1998, RAJAB 1, 1419

Price: Jordan 200 fils

King Hussein, Clinton push for deal at Middle East talks

WYE MILLS (Agencies) — Israeli and Palestinian leaders dug in for serious negotiations on the sixth day of a Middle East summit on Tuesday, with President Bill Clinton again taking the ringmaster role. Officials from both sides said a more businesslike approach had returned after belligerent exchanges on Monday following a Palestinian guerrilla attack on a bus station in Beersheba that injured over 60 people.

"We're into a phase of very hard bargaining. Part of the underbrush has been cleared away," State Department spokesman James Rubin told reporters. "It's part of the end game that is getting more and more serious. Some obstacles have been overcome but significant gaps remain," Rubin said as both sides worked on drafting agreements at the Wye Plantation, a complex of meeting places and residences in lush farmland 70 miles east of Washington.

Clinton, who brought Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and their main aides together on Monday evening, joined the talks at 1 p.m. EDT (1700 GMT) after cancelling a trip to California. He has attended for five of the last six days, an extraordinary commitment of presidential time on a single initiative that has also involved almost all his top foreign policy team.

Shortly after arriving, Clinton was to meet His Majesty King Hussein who also joined the summit on Tuesday. "The King enjoys enormous respect in the region and has played an important role in the peace process," White House spokesman Joe Lockhart said. "We have asked King Hussein to come to the Wye River Conference Centre today," said U.S. State Department spokesman James Rubin.

He said: "We think the King will help bring home to the two delegations the importance of taking the tough choices for peace."

The King arrived at the talks site from Washington where he was resting after his fourth chemotherapy session at Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported. King Hussein piloted his own plane Monday to Washington from Minnesota where he has been undergoing treatment for cancer at the Mayo Clinic since July. Petra quoted political sources at Wye Plantation as expressing their satisfaction with the King's participation in the summit talks in view of his long-standing strong ties with the various concerned parties.

A U.S. official said that the King's stay at Wye Plantation would not be short as he will be exerting efforts to help the two sides reach agreement.

Rubin declined to say whether the negotiations are expected to continue further into the week or to comment on the substance of the ongoing talks.

U.S. Palestinian and Israeli sources said both sides were working to secure a comprehensive interim agreement that would be a



President Bill Clinton on Tuesday steps off his Marine One helicopter to start another day of negotiations with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat during the sixth straight day of peace talks at the secluded Wye River Plantation near Queenstown. Clinton was scheduled to meet His Majesty King Hussein after arrival at the talks site (Reuters photo)

prelude to ultimate "final status" talks on a permanent peace settlement.

Lockhart told reporters: "Our objective remains the same, which is to reach

agreement on the interim issues, so that we can move to final status talks."

On Monday hopes had been fading for such an overall deal, with Netanyahu say-

ing only a partial settlement might be possible and some issues still left over for further talks.

(Continued on page 12)

Regent receives Haifa mayor

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Tuesday reaffirmed Jordan's commitment to the ongoing process and determination to help achieve a comprehensive peace in the Middle East that will guarantee the rights of all concerned parties.

Speaking during a meeting at the Royal Court with the mayor of Haifa, Amran Mitzna, and an accompanying delegation, Prince Hassan said that the peace which Jordan is hoping to achieve is one among people and which recognises the rights and identities of all communities.

The alternative to such peace, the Regent said, is conflict.

The meeting with the Haifa mayor comes one day after the Crown Prince held similar talks with the mayor of Um Al Fahm, an Arab town in northern Israel whose population have been protesting against Israel's seizure of their lands.

Prince Hassan expressed Jordan's keenness on protecting the Islamic sites in the city of Haifa and urged Mitzna and his municipal council to ensure the preservation and protection of these sites' identity.

Mitzna, who was accompanied by a delegation of 15 business executives along with representatives of the commercial and cultural sectors of the city and other officials, said he was eager to develop relations and peaceful coexistence between the Arabs and the Jews in Haifa.

He said Haifa is considered a model for peaceful coexistence and cooperation among all its residents.

Mitzna, who served as a general in the Israeli army and later resigned from his post in protest against the army's aggression on Lebanon, expressed hope for a lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

The meeting was attended by HRH Prince Ali Ben Nayef, private secretary of His Majesty King Hussein, the King's Military Adviser Hmeidi Al Fayed and Parliament Deputy Hamed Farah.

Yemen to begin reoccupation of Hanish archipelago

SANAA (AFP) — Yemen will begin re-occupying parts of the Hanish archipelago from Nov. 1 after an international arbitration panel's ruling last week, a Yemeni official said. The first island to be re-occupied will be Greater Hanish, the official said late Monday. Last Friday, an international arbitration panel awarded the principal islands of the disputed Hanish archipelago in the Red Sea to Yemen despite ownership claims from Eritrea. The Greater Hanish, Lesser Hanish and Jebel Zugar islands control the access in the Bab Al Mandab strait between the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. Following the panel's decision, the two countries decided to normalise their relations. Eritrea and Yemen clashed in December 1995 when Eritrean troops took over Greater Hanish, but they signed a French-brokered accord in May 1996 to seek international arbitration.

Prince Hassan condemns Beersheba grenade attack

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Tuesday sent a cable to Israeli President Ezer Weizman condemning the grenade attack at a bus station in Beersheba that injured 64 people. The Regent expressed his wishes for their speedy recovery.

In return, Weizman called the Regent and thanked him for his cable and the two leaders exchanged views on developments in the peace process.

Weizman said he was in contact with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and expressed hope they will reach a comprehensive agreement.

Prince Hassan said His Majesty King Hussein has expressed his readiness to offer assistance to the Palestinians and the Israelis to bridge the gap between their positions.

The Regent also underlined the need for protecting the Middle East and its peoples from the cycle of violence by arriving at a comprehensive peace that guarantees the rights of all parties.

Prince Hassan and Weizman agreed that any breakthrough in the current peace talks would provide the required guarantees against further acts of violence.

Weizman wished King Hussein speedy recovery.

Four Jordanian soldiers killed in 1967 to be buried in Jerusalem this month

AMMAN (J.T.) — More than three decades after their death in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, four Jordanian soldiers will finally be laid to rest in a Muslim cemetery near Jerusalem later this month with full military honours in a ceremony conducted by the Jordan Armed Forces.

The remains of the four soldiers who died in the battle for Jerusalem, recently unearthed during an archaeological excavation in the eastern part of the city, will be buried on Oct. 27 in a cemetery in the village of Nabi Samuel north-west of Jerusalem, Minister of Information

Nasser Judeh said yesterday.

"The ceremony is in honour of (the soldiers) memory and the blood they shed for the battle for Jerusalem," said Judeh.

Jordan had requested that the remains of the bodies be buried in the Holy City.

Only two of the four soldiers' remains have been identified, and their families have been informed and invited to the ceremony, confirmed Judeh.

The burial ceremony falls two days after the four-year anniversary of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty.

' Hamas carried out Beersheba attack'

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — The armed wing of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, claimed responsibility on Tuesday for a grenade attack by a Palestinian that wounded 64 Israelis, many of them soldiers.

"One of our heroic fighters carried out a heroic operation on Monday morning in the town of Beersheba which targeted a crowd of enemy soldiers," the claim of responsibility said.

The claim was faxed to Reuters in Jerusalem in the name of Hamas's Izzeddine Al Qassam Brigades, whose militants have killed scores of Israelis in suicide bombings and other attacks.

Monday's hand grenade attack on the central bus sta-

tion in the southern city of Beersheba cast a cloud over a peace summit in the United States, where Israeli and Palestinian leaders are meeting to try to thrust out a new interim peace deal.

Israeli police arrested a Palestinian at the scene and said he had confessed to the attack.

The Israeli army on Tuesday named the man as Salem Rajab Al Sarsour, a 29-year-old father of five from the Palestinian-ruled area of Hebron.

It said Sarsour admitted under questioning that he had also stabbed to death a rabbi at a Jewish settler enclave in Hebron on August 20 and hurled grenades at Israeli soldiers in the West Bank city on

Sept. 30, injuring 14 of them. "The investigation is continuing to see if he has been involved in additional acts," the army statement said.

The Palestinian National Authority, in a statement issued through the official WAFA news agency, called Sarsour a "double agent" and alleged he had been working for Israeli intelligence.

It said Sarsour had been due to meet his Israeli controlling officer in Jerusalem on Monday but instead "for unknown reasons he went to Beersheba and did what he did."

The attacker's brother on Tuesday said Sarsour's house was razed by the Israeli army when he was a teenager (see story on page 12).

Iraq asks Security Council to stop U.S. acts

CAIRO (AP) — Continuing its campaign against Washington, Iraq has sent a letter to the U.N. Security Council listing what it calls "illegal American behaviour" and asking the international body to put a stop to it.

The 18-page letter from Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammed Saeed Al Sabah was sent Monday to the council's current president, Jeremy Greenstock of Britain. It was made public on Tuesday.

"In this letter, we list for the Security Council some of the illegal American behaviour and actions that form a clear and flagrant violation of the charter of the United Nations," the letter said. It called on the Security Council to "take deterrent measures."

Iraq has long accused the United States of trying to prolong punishing U.N. trade sanctions against Iraq to try to undercut Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

The sanctions, which limit the sale of oil, were imposed after Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait. The Security Council has said they will not be lifted until U.N. inspectors certify that Iraq has eliminated its weapons of mass destruction.

Turkey says Syria drops support for Kurds

ANKARA (R) — A tense dispute between Turkey and Syria eased on Tuesday as Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz said the Kurdish rebel leader at the centre the row was in Russia and Damascus pledged not to let him enter Syria.

"We have established that he is in Russia in a suburb near Moscow," Yilmaz's spokesman quoted him as saying. Turkey had threatened military action against its southern neighbour Syria for what it said was Damascus' support for Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) guerrillas and for allegedly harbouring Ocalan, known as "Apo". It had demanded Syria expel Ocalan.

A faxed copy of the minutes of a two-day meeting of Turkish and Syrian officials that ended on Tuesday indicated Damascus had met most of Turkey's demands, pledging to

prevent PKK activity on its soil.

"Syria will not allow the PKK in set up arms, logistic or financial support nor to carry out propaganda on its soil," said the document faxed from Turkey's Foreign Ministry and bearing the signatures of Turkish and Syrian delegates.

The mid-level meetings of security and foreign policy experts followed three weeks of high tension fuelled by Turkish threats of military action against its neighbour.

It was arranged after diplomatic efforts by Egypt and Iran to avert a military confrontation between NATO-member Turkey and Arab Syria that might have spread across the region.

Ocalan's PKK have fought a 14-year-long campaign against Turkish security forces for self-rule in the mainly-Kurdish southeast of Turkey. More

than 29,000 people have died in the fighting.

Yilmaz said Turkey had demanded Ocalan's extradition from Russia. "We have taken the necessary initiatives with Russia," he said. "I hope we will get a reply soon."

No one was immediately available for comment at the Russian embassy in Ankara. The Russian ambassador had denied Ocalan was in Moscow after being summoned to Yilmaz's office late on Monday.

"Russia is not a country in show tolerance to people like Apo," Ambassador Alexander Lebedev was quoted as saying by state-run Anatolian news agency.

Turkey's Foreign Minister Ismail Cem said the meeting with Syrian officials, shrouded in secrecy in southern Turkey, had produced positive results.

"At this stage we have seen an attitude from Syria that

gives us confidence. It is a good result. I hope this result will lead to the change we expect," Anatolian news agency quoted Cem as saying in Ankara.

"We will closely watch Syria's implementation of this undertaking."

Ocalan on Monday said he was no longer in Syria but in "Kurdistan," a term referring to a swathe of territory of Kurdish-populated land in Turkey, Iraq, Syria, Iran and Armenia.

Egyptian newspapers reported that President Hosni Mubarak and his Syrian counterpart Hafez Al Assad had discussed by telephone the outcome of the start of the Syrian-Turkish talks.

Syria and Turkey, a strongly secular but mainly Muslim state, are also at odds over water sharing and territory ties with Israel.

Parliament to decide whether to indict ministers:

9 officials referred to Criminal Court in connection with water pollution crisis

By Ahmad Khatib

AMMAN — Nine government officials accused of negligence in connection with this summer's water pollution crisis will be tried by the Criminal Court soon, judicial officials said on Tuesday. Two of the nine face the charge of forgery.

Amman Prosecutor General Mohammad Harahsheh told the Jordan Times he sent the results of his investigation and charge sheet over to the Criminal Court on Tuesday to enable it to set a date for the much-awaited trial.

In a two full pages report published in the daily press yesterday, Harahsheh indicated that there was ground for prosecuting the three former water ministers who held the post since Jordan signed the peace treaty with Israel in 1994, officials said.

He said he was sending the investigation report to the Ministry of Justice to petition Parliament to indict the ministers.

Ministry of Justice officials said a legal committee was studying the issue "in order to take necessary actions."

"The Parliament is the party

that indicts and prosecutes ministers. Hence, any procedures before that would be invalid," said one official.

According to the Constitution, ministers are tried by a higher council for any alleged crimes committed while in office but only after an indictment by a two-thirds majority of the Lower House of Parliament.

The higher council is headed by the Senate speaker and includes three senators appointed by the Upper House and five judges from the highest court of the land. It passes its verdicts by a majority of

six. The three former ministers allegedly failed to take decisions to improve facilities at the Zai Water Treatment Plant to enable it to handle new water supplies coming from Lake Tiberias under the 1994 peace treaty between Jordan and Israel, according to Harahsheh's investigation report.

He said they failed to install an early warning system at the Zai plant to warn staff in case the quality of water entering and leaving the plant, which supplies Amman with over 40 per cent of its domestic water

needs, drops below standard. Minister of Justice Jawdat Sbouh has in send the file to Lower House Speaker Sa'ed Hayel Srou, who in turn presents it to Parliament when it meets for its ordinary session later this year to decide whether to indict the ministers or not.

Harahsheh launched a probe after receiving a 100-page report prepared by a commission set up by the government to investigate the causes behind the water crisis.

In July, residents of Amman, especially the Western areas, complained of foul-smelling

and discoloured water supplies mostly pumped by the Zai plant.

The crisis culminated with the resignation of former Water Minister Munther Hadadin.

Many water experts and officials had largely blamed huge amounts of organic substance, including unusual levels of algae concentration in water coming from Tiberias, for harming the efficiency of the plant's filtering system.

Pumping from the plant halted for over seven weeks while local and foreign experts tried to find a solution, includ-

ing using super active carbon to get rid of the extra levels of algae and the release of fresh fish into the canal feeding the plant as part of a biological solution.

The government of Fayed Tarawneh, which took over on Aug. 20, announced a month later that pumping at the Zai plant had been restored to full capacity and original quality.

Harahsheh's probe also found out that a similar water contamination crisis took place last year but went unnoticed by the public.

(Continued on page 12)

Man executed for 1996 murder

Fourth execution this year

ID CHECK IN JERUSALEM: Three female Israeli border police Tuesday carry out an identity check on two Palestinian men selling wares on Ben Yehuda Street, a pedestrian shopping area in Jerusalem. A Palestinian militant wounded 64 people in a hand-grenade attack in southern Israel on Monday. The Israeli delegation to Middle East peace summit at Wye Plantation tried to limit the talks to security issues in the wake of the attack (Reuters photo)

Saleh then filed a complaint

'Algerian rebel leader may have been killed'

gest militant

'New public buildings must have facilities for physically challenged'

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Greater Amman Municipality will not authorise the construction of new public buildings unless facilities for the disabled are included, an official said Tuesday.

The municipality has established a new department in charge of overseeing the implementation of the building code law for the disabled in public buildings, said the department's director, Mohammad Tarawneh.

"The new department will help enforce the law, which is

According to Tarawneh, the new department will coordinate with the Ministry of Education to apply the building code to 10 schools in Amman soon.

Egypt's largest militant group denies ties with Ben Laden

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt's largest Islamist group, the Gamaa Islamiya, denied Tuesday that it has any links with the Islamist umbrella group established in February by dissident Saudi millionaire Osama Ben Laden.

"The Gamaa has never been approached to join an international front whose goal is to counter the U.S. presence in the region," Gamaa leader Rifai Taha wrote on the group's Internet site.

"We aren't associated with such a

front," he said in the group's newsletter Al Mourabitoun published on its web site.

Experts on Islamist movements say the International Islamic Front to Fight Crusaders and Jews was formed in February in Peshawar, Pakistan, and is led by Ben Laden.

As well as Ben Laden's group, the front is said to include Egypt's smaller Islamist group Jihad and groups from Bangladesh, Kashmir and Pakistan.

The United States blamed Beo Laden for the Aug. 7 bombings of its embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in which 258 people were killed.

In retaliation, Washington attacked suspected terrorist sites in Sudan and Afghanistan.

On Aug. 22, Gamaa Islamiya, threatened to carry out reprisals of its own for the U.S. strikes, saying in a statement received here by AFP that the "crime will not go unpunished."

Gamaa Islamiya called on "Islam-

ic movements, particularly those involved in the jihad (holy war), to counter the American arrogance and communicate with the United States *in the only language it understands*." But the following month, Muntasser Al Zayat, a lawyer for Islamists, said that Gamaa Islamiya had cut its ties with Ben Laden in July, several months after deciding to examine a truce in its war against the Egyptian government.

NEWS IN BRIEF

'Uday raking in millions from embargo'

DUBAI (AFP) — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's eldest son, Uday, is raking in hundreds of millions of dollars thanks to the eight-year-old U.N. embargo, an Iraqi defector said in an interview published on Tuesday. "Uday profits the most from the embargo," said Abbas Al Janabi, who describes himself as former private secretary to the president's son. "He controls the business in whisky, cigarettes, urea [fertiliser] as well as the smuggling of gas oil," he told the London-based Arabic newspaper Al Hayat from a hide-out in Europe. "It's in his interest for the embargo to stay in place because he also controls the [humanitarian] aid," which is shipped into Iraq, mostly from the United Arab Emirates, said Janabi.

Iraq expects parts at end of November

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq's Oil Minister Amr Mohammad Rasheed said on Tuesday he did not expect spare parts for its dilapidated oil industry to reach Iraq before the end of next month. "We don't expect any spare parts or any equipment to come before the end of the fourth stage of the memorandum of understanding which will end on Nov. 25," Rasheed told reporters. But he said engineers and technicians of his ministry were doing their best to increase Iraq's export capacity under the fourth phase of the oil-for-food deal signed with the United Nations.

Minister calls livestock development

AMMAN (Petra) — The Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development Tuesday opened a three-day symposium on veterinary services and protection of livestock wealth in the Arab World. The symposium seeks to promote coordination among Arab states in the fields of veterinary services, identify difficulties preventing the implementation of development projects to preserve livestock wealth, and review measures to combat animal diseases. In his opening address, Agriculture Minister Mijhem Khreisha stated that Arab countries have so far failed to give enough attention to and take collective measures against diseases affecting livestock, a situation he said has resulted in the Arab World's increasing food imports. Despite the region's natural resources, Arab states continue to import veterinary vaccines, live sheep and fodder, said the minister.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 4773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:10 "The Adventures of Teddy Ruxpin"

15:30 Children's Programme — Halfway to Cross the Galaxy and Turn Left

16:00 ..French Documentary

16:30 ..Master of the Nazir

17:00 ..Doc. — Ushuala

18:15 ..Wind at My Back (Ep.11)

19:00 ..Le Journal

19:15 Science Magazine — E-M6

19:30 ..News headlines

19:35 ..Comedy — Two Point Children

20:00 Doc. — Envoy Special Magazine

20:30 ..Kung Fu

21:10 ..Great Moments of Science and Technology

21:30 ..Faces and Places

22:00 ..News in English

22:30 ..Chicago Hope

23:59 ..Drama — Bugs

01:00 ..End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

04:21 ..Fajr

05:39 ..(Sunrise)Duhna

11:20 ..Dhuhr

14:52 ..'Asr

17:02 ..Maghreb

18:19 ..'Isba

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweets, Tel. 5920740

Assemblies of God Church Tel. 4663785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590

Terra Sancta Church Tel. 4622366

Anglican Church Tel. 4624853/4624811.

St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 4771751.

Amman International Church Tel. 5865897

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 5688404

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 5811295

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 4654932

St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel. 5661757

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 4637440

Greek Orthodox Church Tel. 4646138

Church of Presentation, Swiss Tel. 5920146

The Uniate Catholic Church Tel. 4624757

The ..English-Langue Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190

Evangelical Free Church Tel. 4892679

The Baptist Church Tel. 4628052

The Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 4771331

The Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 4775261

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the

Department of Meteorology

Moderate weather conditions will prevail with temperatures rising further becoming slightly higher than average and winds southeasterly moderate.

In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate to active and seas calm.

Amman ..14/30

Aqaba ..20/35

Deserts ..12/31

Jordan Valley ..19/36

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 28, Aqaba 36 Humidity readings: Amman 21 per cent, Aqaba 32 per cent.

Following are the highest temperatures expected today in the following areas:

Ajloun ..24

Jerash ..31

Um Qays ..31

Madaba ..29

Petra ..30

Dead Sea ..37

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

Dr. Wissam Hsayyin ..4748563

Dr. Muntzer Al Oraini ..4779959

Dr. Khalid Abdo ..4651129

Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayyin ..4620115

Firas pharmacy ..5661912

AMMAN:

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery ..5921199

The Islamic, Abdul ..5666131/7

Hussein Medical Centre Tel. 585856

Luzmila ..4630195

Khalidi Maternity ..4644281/6

Akileh Maternity ..4642341/2

Jabal Amman Maternity ..4642362

Malhas, J. Amman ..4636140

Palestine, Shmeisani ..5607071

Shmeisani Hospital ..5669131

Jordan Hospital ..5607550

University Hospital ..5353444

Al-Mushar Hospital 5667279

Al-Ahli, Abdali ..5664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 4777101/3

Al-Bashir ..5661176

Army, Marka ..4891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital 5602240/50

Amal Hospital ..5674155

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital ..(09)983323

Zarqa National Hospital ..(09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital ..(09)986732

Al Hikma Modern Hospital ..(09)99099

IRBID:

Dr. Ghazi Ta'amneh ..50080

Al Qods pharmacy ..(—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Salah Salfarini ..98756

Khalifeh pharmacy ..985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre ..4637111

Civil Defence Department 5661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue ..4630341

Civil Defence Emergency ..199

Rescue Police 192, 4621111, 4637777

Fire Brigade ..4617101

Blood Bank ..4775121

Highway Police ..5343402

Traffic Police ..4896390

Public Security Dept. ..4630321

Hotel Complaints ..5605800

Price Complaints ..5661176

Water & Sewage Complaints ..489467

Amman Municipality Complaints ..4787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) ..121

Overseas Calls ..0132

Central Amman Telephone Repairs ..4623101

Abdali Tel. Repairs ..5661101

Radio Television ..4773111

Jordan Jordan ..4774111

Water Authority ..5680100

HOSPITALS

J. Electricity Authority 5815615

Electric Power Co. ..4636381

RJ Flight Information 4453200

Queen Alia Int. Airport ..4453200

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (44)53200 where it should always be verified.

Information on other flights are supplied on phone 44 (52700) or 44(53250).

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

06:30 ..Damascus (RJ)

08:30 ..Jeddah (RJ)

08:45 ..Larnaca (RJ)

08:55 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

14:55 ..New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

16:30 ..Madrid (RJ)

17:05 ..Istanbul (RJ)

17:05 ..Paris (RJ)

Princess Basma Hospital ..(02)275555

Greek Catholic Hospital ..(02)272275

Ibn Al Nafees Hospital ..(02)347100

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

17:40 Brussels, Geneva (RJ)

18:10 London, Vienna (RJ)

18:25 ..Frankfurt, Berlin (RJ)

18:55 ..Rome (RJ)

23:15 ..Beirut (RJ)

00:05 ..Cairo (RJ)

Other Flights

10:00 ..Sanaa, Hudaidah (Y)

10:30 ..Kuwait (KU)

11:30 ..Jeddah (SV)

12:15 ..Cairo (MS)

13:10 ..Tunis (TU)

14:05 ..Vienna (OS)

15:10 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (EK)

17:35 Karachi, Abu Dhabi (PK)

17:40 ..Beirut (ME)

18:05 ..Frankfurt (LH)

22:20 ..Istanbul (TK)

22:40 ..Amsterdam (KL)

23:15 ..London (BA)

01:25 ..Athens, Beirut (OA)

04:15 ..Antalia (TK)

Other Flights

05:35 ..Larnaca (CY)

06:30 ..Paris (AF)

08:20 ..London (BA)

10:30 ..Ta'iz, Sanaa (Y)

11:45 ..Kuwait (KU)

13:00 ..Jeddah (SV)

13:15 ..Cairo (MS)

14:00 ..Bahrain, Muscat (GF)

14:10 ..Tunis (TU)

14:50 ..Vienna (OS)

16:20 ..Sharjah (AH)

16:20 ..Dubai (EK)

19:00 ..Beirut (ME)

19:30 Abu Dhabi, Karachi (PK)

22:55 ..Beirut (ME)

23:40 Damascus, Amsterdam (KL)

02:45 ..Beirut, Athens (OA)

DEPARTURES

05:30 ..Larnaca (RJ)

08:00 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)

10:45 ..Rome (RJ)

Other Flights

07:00 ..Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)

08:30 ..Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)

16:30 ..Tel Aviv (from Marka Airport) (RW)

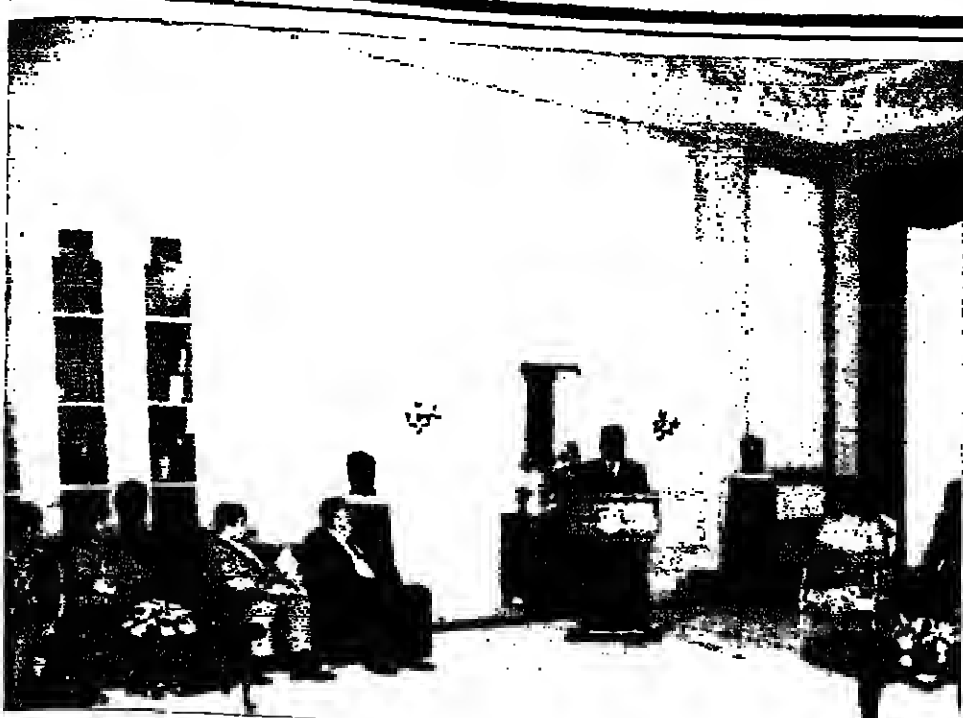
21:50 ..Aqaba (from OATA) (RW)

Other Flights

07:00 ..Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)

08:30 ..Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)

21:50 ..Aqaba (from OATA) (RW)



HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Tuesday addresses participants at a meeting of representatives of women's groups and government officials (Photo by Boghos)

Equal opportunities should be available to all — Regent

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Tuesday said that all forms of discrimination against women must be ended and that equal opportunities should be available to all people.

Speaking at a meeting with a delegation representing women's organisations in Jordan, Prince Hassan said the social sector is among the main issues of any dialogue. He stressed the need for involving competent people in the development process.

The Regent said accurate information and a scientific methodology are needed in order to deal with issues successfully.

Prince Hassan underlined the important role Jordanian women can play in social development.

Amal Sabbagh, secretary general of the Jordanian

National Committee for Women, said the committee was instructed by the Cabinet in 1996 to participate in drawing up policies concerning Jordanian women and to suggest amendments to legislation concerning women's rights.

She added that the committee is currently involved in incorporating women's issues into general socio-economic development plans of the Ministry of Labour and other departments.

Another JNCW member, Asma Khader, noted that the Constitution and the National Charter call for non-discrimination against women and for equal opportunities for all citizens.

Despite these facts, some laws still discriminate against women, she said, adding that the committee has prepared amendments to these laws.

The Crown Prince hosted a lunch for the audience during

which a number of economic and domestic issues were discussed.

Prince Hassan expressed his appreciation for Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, the JNCW president and the committee's members for their efforts in serving women's causes and helping Jordanian women contribute to the country's development.

Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh underlined the role of women in the national dialogue that his government has initiated with the various public sectors.

Minister of Social Development Mohammad Mamer presented a briefing on the measures taken by the government to guarantee and protect women's rights.

The meeting was also attended by Royal Court Chief Jawad Anani and a number of ministers.

Government challenges Syrian claim that no Jordanian officials detained

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — The government on Tuesday challenged Syria's claim that no Jordanian official was among the several hundred Jordanian detainees allegedly in its prisons and said a government official was still missing after crossing into Syria a few weeks ago.

Information Minister Nasser Judeh's statement came a few days after Syria's Foreign Minister Farouk Sharaa claimed that no Jordanian official was detained in Syria.

Judeh told reporters that Mousa Nasser Karasneh, a government official working with the Bank for Municipal and Village Development in Amman, went missing after he entered Syria on a private visit.

The minister did not give more details about Karasneh. He said, however, that Jordan is seeking the release of Jordanian prisoners and detainees.

"We do care about our citizens, even if they hold minor posts in government departments. We want to know how

many Jordanians are detained, their names, their whereabouts and all other related details," the minister said.

"They should have fair trials, and their families should be allowed to visit them," the minister added.

Judeh said the latest government figures indicate that 190 Jordanians are detained in Syria and 240 to 250 are missing, "most likely detained."

Judeh said the Syrian government had no right to demand that Jordanian visitors report to "security centres for questioning."

"They have the right to prevent Jordanian nationals from entering their territories but they have no right to question our citizens when they enter. If they are not welcome, then the Syrians can just send them back," the minister said.

"It is not acceptable at all that our citizens go missing while visiting Syria," Judeh said.

"We are not in a media battle with Syria. But we are responding to statements by particular officials in Syria," the minister said at a weekly news briefing.

Judeh said relations between Amman and Damascus might be discussed during a visit by Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa to Jordan next week.

Among the issues Musa will discuss with senior government officials are the stand-off between Damascus and Ankara and the deadlock in the peace process between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

"I believe that there is no dangerous crisis between Jordan and Syria and that there is no political crisis between the two states," the minister said.

Prince Ghazi urges Muslim youth to correct misunderstandings of Islam

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Prince Ghazi on Tuesday urged Muslim youth around the world to work towards rectifying incorrect images of Islam.

Addressing participants at the Eighth International Conference of the World Assembly of Muslim Youth, Prince Ghazi said Muslim youth should be united to face this challenge.

"This meeting is being held while Islam and its civilisation face a campaign of suspicion that links it with violence and extremism. We should work hard to correct this impression," said Prince Ghazi, who deputised for His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent.

"The duty of Muslim youth is to remove the misunderstanding of Islam through collective efforts to show its real picture," Prince Ghazi told more than 400 representatives of Muslim organisations from all over the world.

The four-day meeting, which is being held under the title "Muslim Youth and Contemporary Challenges," will cover among other things political, social, economic and scientific challenges facing Muslim youth.

Among the participants in the meeting are Saudi Arabian Awqaf and Religious Affairs Minister Abdullah Bin Turki and senior Muslim figures.

The assembly's secretary general, Mani Jouhmi, said the major challenge facing Muslim youth is the "new world order, which is targeting the Muslim World."

He said "extremism" should be properly studied and corrected. "An inclination towards violence [in the Muslim World] has served nobody but its enemies, whose sole objective is to destroy it and create instability," Jouhmi added.

He urged Muslim youth and governments to cooperate and unify their ranks "to face their

enemy."

"We have to reach a common agreement which is approved by all parties, who should adopt it, defend it and work hard to ensure its success," Jouhmi said.

During their meeting, participants will discuss 72 working papers dealing with drugs, extremism, political and economic problems, women, modern technology and other issues.

They also will discuss problems facing Muslim youths in Palestine, Kashmir, Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The assembly is an independent body established in 1974 with 34 offices worldwide.

Participants represent Muslims in the following states: Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Kuwait, Egypt, Palestine, Malaysia, Lebanon, India, Japan, Nigeria, France, Ghana, Senegal, Britain, Bangladesh, Morocco, the U.S., Finland, South Korea, Canada, Kenya and Sudan.

Two-year-old critical following father's alleged attack

By Rana Hussein

AMMAN — A two-year-old girl is in critical condition at Al Bashir Hospital after her two-year-old father allegedly cut her throat, official sources said yesterday.

According to the sources, Abdul Rahman D. attempted to kill his baby girl Sabrin "because he wanted to take revenge on his third wife following a quarrel."

"The couple had a fight and the wife went to her family's house, so the father decided to cut their child's throat while she was sleeping Monday night in revenge," the source said.

The source told the Jordan Times that Sabrin was discovered by her 18-year-old sister Maysoun, who rushed her to Al Bashir Hospital.

"The toddler was operated on, but her chances of survival are slim," the source said.

The father turned himself in to police, the source added. According to the source, the father is being held by police pending further investigations.

Police are investigating the case.

Man's death investigated

In another incident Tuesday, the Criminal Prosecutor ordered that an autopsy be performed on the body of a 30-year-old which was to be buried yesterday after evidence suggested that the man may have been murdered instead of dying of natural causes.

The body of Atallah Mohammad was about to be buried "when the criminal prosecutor received information from the victim's family that he might have been murdered," according to a source.

"In their preliminary examinations, police surgeons found a bullet wound to the chest," the source told the Jordan Times. The source said the body will be transferred to the National Institute for Forensic Medicine for an autopsy.

Murder suspect arrested

In another development, police on Monday announced the arrest of an Arab national in connection with the double murder of a supermarket owner and his son in Yaboudeh area near Jericho on Sunday, officials said.

Fa'eq Sa'id, 46, and his 19-year-old son Khalid were found shot to death in the back room of their supermarket.

Police officials were quoted in the press as saying that they arrested an Arab national who had been employed by Sa'id for the past three months while on his way to Karak.

The authorities said they believed the motive behind the murder was theft.

Lawyer commits suicide

Also Tuesday, a 30-year-old lawyer reportedly committed suicide in his office in Marka due to what the officials described as financial troubles.

Attorney Aymun was found dead with one bullet wound to his forehead.

An official source told the Jordan Times that evidence collected from the scene indicated that the victim killed himself. "His office was locked from the inside, the gun used in the shooting was found near him, and we found a paper apparently with his handwriting stating that he was suffering from financial problems and decided to take his own life," the source

NEWS IN BRIEF

Regent offers condolences to Mubarak

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Tuesday offered condolences to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak over the death of more than 43 people who were killed in a railway accident in Kafr Al Douwar in northern Egypt. The Regent also wished the estimated 90 people injured in the accident a full recovery.

'Reform and Challenge' trial adjourned

AMMAN (J.T.) — The defence team of 10 people on trial for carrying out subversive acts Tuesday asked the court to give them time to prepare their statements. The 10 defendants are part of a group of 13 known as "Reform and Challenge" who are accused of possessing, transporting and manufacturing explosives with illicit intent, carrying out extremist attacks and membership in an illegal organisation. Three people facing the same charges are being tried in absentia. The trial is expected to resume on Nov. 11.

Wall collapse kills two

AILOUN (Petra) — Two people were killed and four injured Tuesday in Kufunjab town near Ajloun when a three-metre high earthen wall collapsed. The Civil Defence Department said workers digging a foundation for a retaining wall caused the collapse.

Court upholds student's suspension

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Higher Court of Justice on Tuesday upheld a decision by a University of Jordan disciplinary committee suspending a student for one year and cancelling her examination results for cheating. H.A., a Faculty of Pharmacy student, had filed a lawsuit against the University of Jordan president, the deans council and the disciplinary committee that issued the ruling against her after she was caught cheating during a chemistry exam on May 3. The court stated that the student, who was caught bringing photos and other materials into the examination hall, "confessed to cheating." The tribunal was comprised of justices Abdullah Haddad, Jamil Haddadin, Misbah Thiaib, Haidham Gharebbeh and Mohammad Qothah.

what's going on

PANEL DISCUSSION

* Panel discussion: "Family Violence" by Dr. Mou'men Al Haddad and Lawyer Sawwan Ishaq at the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), Jabal Amman at 6:00 p.m. (Tel. 4641793).

FILMS

* Television series entitled "Min un cuadro" (in Spanish with commentary in Arabic by Dr. Khalid Khreis) at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman at 6:30 p.m. (Tel. 4610858). (Another film entitled "Jansapellejo", based on the novel of Felipe Trigo, will be screened on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.).

* Children's film "The Adventure of Pinocchio" at the British Council, Jabal Amman at 5:00 p.m.

* German film "Lisbon Story" at Goethe-Institut, Jabal Amman at 7:00 p.m.

* "The Firm" at the American Center, Abdoun on Thursday Oct. 22 at 5:00 p.m.

LECTURE

* "Islamic Art in Terms of Contemporary Criticism" by Dr. Maen Adnan at Darul Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh on Thursday Oct. 22 at 6:00 p.m.

* PALESTINIAN HERITAGE WEEK

* Concert for children at the Professional Associations Complex (3:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.).

* Song festival at the Professional Associations Complex on Thursday and Friday Oct. 22-23 (6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.).

* POETRY RECITAL

* Poetry recital by Ziyad Anani, Uthman Hassan, Tareq Malkawi, and Haydar Bustani at the City Hall, Ras Al Ain at 6:00 p.m.

* EXHIBITIONS

* Display of autumn collection at The Jordan Design and Trade Centre, off Wadi Sogut St. until Oct. 31 (Tel. 5699141/2).

* Works by Laila Jamal at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibdeh, until Oct. 26.

'Jordan witnesses 36% increase in tourist arrivals'

AMMAN (J.T.) — The number of European and American tourists visiting Jordan this year exceeded forecasts and helped stabilise the tourism situation, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Akel Biltaji said Tuesday. Addressing a press conference on the tourism industry and the outcome of visits to France and the U.S., Biltaji said the number of visitors in Jordan this summer increased by 36 per cent over the same period last year, despite a general downturn in the tourism industry and the economies of countries in some Asian countries.

Hotels in the southern parts of the country, including Aqaba, Wadi Rum and Petra, are fully booked, said the minister, who noted that the winter tourism season which began on Sept. 15

is expected to bring more tourists. Noting that the average stay of tourists in Jordan has risen slightly from an average of 3.7 nights to 4.1 nights, Biltaji said each visitor spends \$85 to \$100 a day on accommodation, fees for visits to archaeological sites and visas. He added that the ministry last month prohibited visitors from bringing their own food and drink into archaeological sites.

According to Biltaji, the surge in the number of visitors was largely due to the increase in Gulf nationals visiting Jordan during the summer.

In the first nine months of 1998, a total of 52,300 visitors entered Jordan through the Wadi Araba crossing point, 44 per cent of whom spent only

one night in the country, he said. The number of rental cars available in the country rose from 1,600 in 1996 to 7,000 at present, Biltaji added.

Referring to the Ministry of Tourism's efforts to promote the industry, Biltaji said the ministry's annual fiscal budget now stands at JD5.2 million, with the majority going to market Jordan abroad.

The ministry plans to create a special department in charge of "conference tourism," he said.

Biltaji said his visit to France was dedicated to following up talks in Amman last April to promote French-Jordanian tourism cooperation. France's assistance in developing a number of archaeological sites in Jerash and other tourist attractions were among the topics

discussed, said the minister.

Discussion with the French also covered Paris' assistance to Amman to develop and modernise hotel training at Amman Hotel to meet the requirements of Jordan's tourism industry, he added.

According to Biltaji, France promised to send a team of experts to study ways to help the country's tourism industry.

Biltaji said he attended a conference and exhibition by U.S. travel and tourist offices from Oct. 14-18, noting that the exhibition included a wing that displayed various aspects of Jordan's archaeological sites and other places of interest.

He said that in 1997, a total of 86,000 Americans visited Jordan, a number expected to rise to 100,000 this year.

New type of marriage raises questions despite rarity in Jordan

By Munther Murjan

AMMAN — A small number of Jordanians are opting for a new type of legal Muslim coupling known as "passers-by" marriages, in which the husband visits the wife occasionally but generally does not stay the night.

Though this unorthodox marriage, known as "misyar" in Arabic, is not encouraged by the faith and is not widely accepted by society, it is considered a legal bond, Jordanian officials and Arab Muslim scholars say.

"We are aware of a few misyar marriages, but it remains a new phenomenon in Jordan," one senior government official told the Jordan Times on Tuesday. He and others declined to give any figures.

The idea, which has flourished in Saudi Arabia, other Arab Gulf countries and Egypt over the past four years, appears to get around the problem of eligible women gradually becoming spinsters when no man asks for their hand and other social taboos, such as the re-marriage of female widows and divorcees. But others were more sceptical of the arrangement.

"Misyar marriages are simply another legal excuse for polygamy," said Jordanian lawyer and human rights activist Asma Khader.

"They are a legal conduit

for men to have legal sex with women," she added, echoing similar views held by many Jordanian liberals. "Such a marriage gives men the legal right to enter into a relationship without creating a family, which is the essence of marriage."

Misyar marriages include all legal obligations provided for in the Koran, including bride money, witnesses and parental approval. However, they lack public announcement (ishar'a) that accompanies a Muslim marriage through hosting a party, and the number of people informed of the union is kept to a minimum.

In the Gulf as well as Jordan, most "passers-by" marriages involve an already married man taking a woman as his second, third or fourth wife, and often a man's other wife or wives will not even know he has entered into a misyar marriage.

As a result, several scholars and human rights activists have expressed concern over possible social damage resulting from such secret unions.

Hamdi Murad, deputy secretary general of the Ministry of Awqaf, said misyar marriages could help get around social taboos against females "who missed the train of marriage."

But he added: "Any man seeking a misyar marriage has to fear God and to make sure

he is not entering into this marriage to take advantage of the woman involved."

Abdul Aziz Khayat, former awqaf minister, said he does not encourage such marriages because of possible after-effects that could harm society and individuals.

"Sharia [Islamic jurisprudence] gives priority to preventing social harm over attaining individual welfare and benefit," he said.

"In most cases, certain troubles could arise after the death of the husband in a misyar marriage and his 'secret' wife and her children become known to the rest of his family," he added.

"Usually, the known family of the deceased will disavow the other wife and of her children, causing a tragedy that touches their lives of many for years to come," Khayat explained.

In a traditional society where marriage remains a form of protection and generates more social respect for women, ordinary Jordanians were divided over misyar marriages.

"I believe it is a masquerade," said Eman Ahmad, a 28-year-old pharmacist. "Having a husband is important as he can be a father, a brother, a son and a lover. But that does not give him the right to come and visit me for a few hours every day under this marriage, which does not force him to provide for my daily existence or remain with me."

"I do not like such an idea which seems designed to satisfy certain physical and emotional needs," she added.

Abdul Rahman Sa'd, a lab technician, disagreed. "This is not a perfect marriage, but

what do you do with all the numbers of women who have not married yet?"

"It is a legal way to satisfy all the physical needs without sharing much of the financial and social responsibility," Sa'd said.

In most misyar marriages in the Gulf, most women reportedly continue to live with their parents at home with their husbands visiting occasionally. In other cases, women have waived their right to bride money and other financial commitments for the sake of such a loose union.

"I cannot imagine why any woman would live under circumstances where she remains a captive at her family's house and is controlled by both her parents and new husband," said Khader.

"If a woman is financially independent and is not mar-

ried because of the age factor, or because she is a divorcee or a widow, this does not mean she has to accept such a humiliating situation [misyar marriage]," said Dalal, a 30-year-old nurse.

But to Murad and others, the benefits of misyar marriages are many.

"A woman staying at her parents' house and meeting her husband for a few hours every day is far better than her not getting married or engaging in acts of immorality," according to Murad.

But many, including Khayat, believe misyar marriages will remain rare in Jordan.

"It does not seem to be taking hold here," said Khayat.

"But with the gradual break up of strong family ties and the population increase, it might have a chance."

OBITUARY

The Skat Club-Amman mourns with deep regret and sorrow the passing of club member:

Munir Jubraeel Suleiman Saigali (Abu Karim)

The club offers its deep condolences to Mr. Saigali's wife and children and all members of the Saigali and Mazbar families. May God bless his soul.

OBITUARY

The International Association of Golden Helmsmen (Jordan chapter) mourns with deep regret and sorrow the passing of

Munir Jubraeel Suleiman Saigali (Abu Karim)

The society offers its deep condolences to Mr. Saigali's wife and children and all members of the Saigali and Mazbar families. May God bless his soul.

D'Alema bids to put together new Italian government

ROME (AFP) — Former communist Massimo D'Alema was Tuesday attempting to weld together a coalition government to include ministers from across the political spectrum.

D'Alema, 49, who heads the Left Democrats (DS), was formally appointed Italy's new prime minister Monday after he managed to scrape together enough support to form a new government.

However, observers warn the difficult horse-trading for ministerial portfolios now begins.

The list of ministers is to be made public by Thursday, according to the Italian media. D'Alema wants the line-up ready in time for a European Union summit in Austria on Oct. 24 and 25.

The list will then be presented to President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro before the new government must secure a majority vote in parliament.

D'Alema was also due to meet Pope John Paul II later Tuesday.

The Pontiff arrived at the Italian presidential palace at 11:15 a.m. (0915 GMT) after making the short journey from the Vatican City by papamobile.

The Catholic church has expressed concern over D'Alema's Communist past and attitude to church doctrines.

The Pope and his delegation, on an official visit to Italy, will hold talks with

Scalfaro before meeting the premier-elect.

D'Alema must balance the claims of his new allies — the centre-left Olive Tree coalition, dissident Communists and the centre-right Democratic Union for the Republic (UDR).

The parties gave their written agreement to back D'Alema during 11th-hour talks Monday. Their support should be enough to give him a majority in the 630-seat Italian parliament — and make him the first ex-Communist to head a government in Western Europe.

The fiercest battles will be over the ministries of education, justice and the post of deputy premier, according to observers.

D'Alema will be forced to free up some ministries for centrist and dissident communist politicians who have opposing views on education, the family and other issues.

The Italian press said Tuesday outgoing Economy Minister Carlo Azeglio Ciampi would keep his job in the new government as would Vincenzo Visco at Finance, Edo Ronchi at Environment and Rosaria Bindi at Health.

Press reports also said Walter Veltroni, outgoing deputy prime minister and culture minister, would quit government and take over from D'Alema as head of the Left Democrats.

Monday, D'Alema sought to defend his unlikely alliance saying his govern-

ment would be "neither an anomaly nor an extravagance" and arguing that other countries had coalition governments.

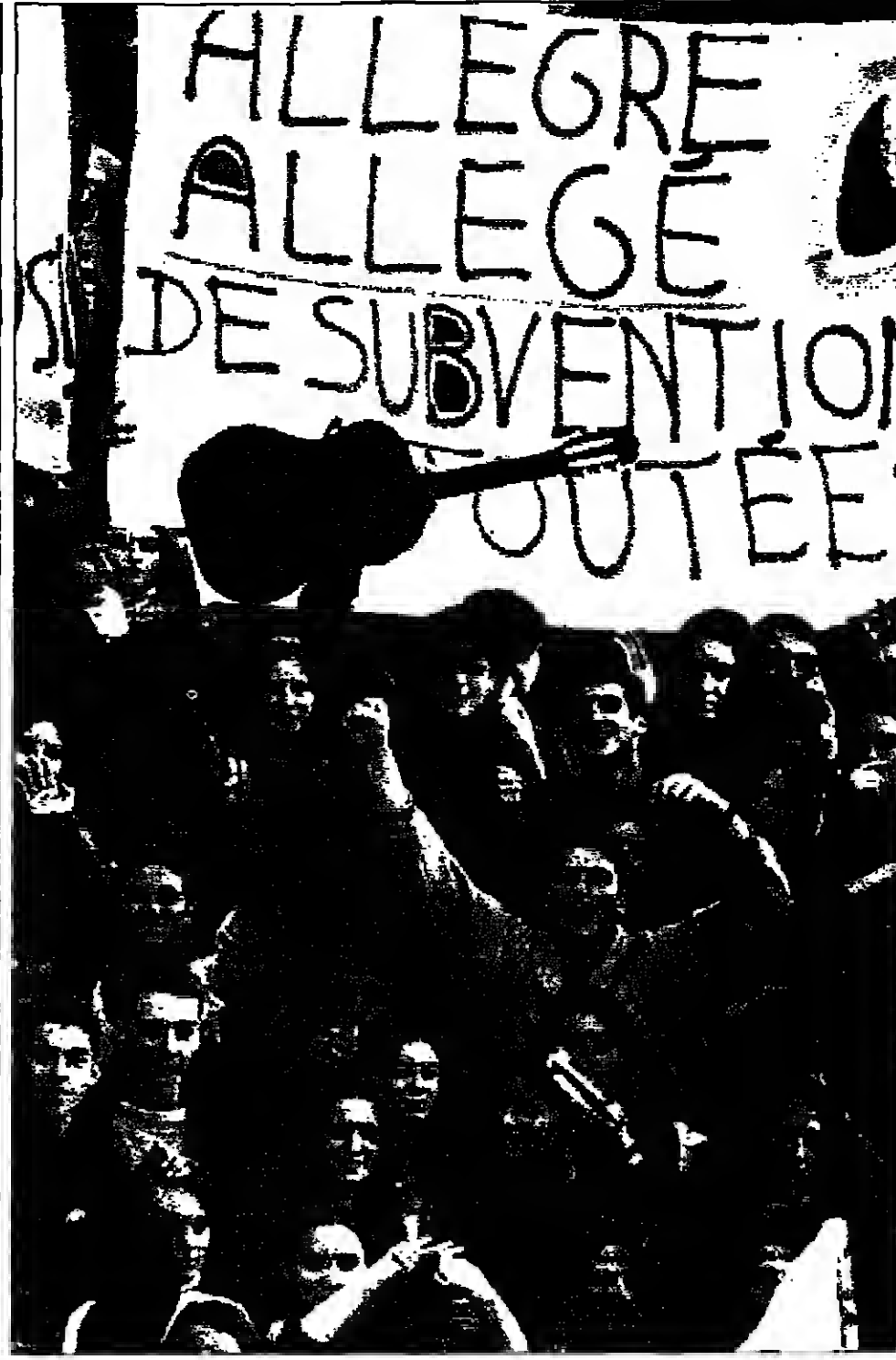
D'Alema will head Italy's 56th post-war government after the collapse of Romano Prodi's centre-left administration on Oct. 9. Prodi was forced to step down after the Refounded Communist Party rejected his budget plans and forced a confidence vote.

Prodi lost that motion by just one vote, bringing down what had been Italy's first centre-left coalition and its second longest-serving government in post-war history.

D'Alema has said he will submit the same budget plan that triggered Prodi's downfall and has indicated he will honour the commitments made by Prodi, including a pledge to reduce the working week to 35 hours and extend the number of years of compulsory schooling.

However, D'Alema's political manoeuvrings have prompted criticism, including from Prodi who lamented the way in which the premier-elect was cobbling together support from across the political spectrum.

Prodi warned D'Alema was moving away from a system of two broad opposition camps on the centre-left and centre-right and exacerbating Italy's notoriously unstable political system.



French students march through the streets of Bordeaux as part of an ongoing nationwide movement calling for better education facilities. Banner at top reads 'Allegre, Allegre, doubtful subsidies' (Reuters photo)

Second wave of French school demonstrations starts

PARIS (R) — Tens of thousands of high school pupils demanding more teachers, smaller classes and better equipment took to the streets of France Tuesday for a second wave of concerted nationwide protests.

Two motorways in the south and east of France were partially blocked by striking students while shopkeepers on Paris' Left Bank boarded up their windows for fear of looting.

Security has been beefed up around the country especially in Paris, where rioting marred a major student rally last week.

Acting Interior Minister Jean-Jack Queyranne told reporters the government had done all it could to improve policing at the lively, often chaotic marches, with check points set up to prevent troublemakers from hijacking the protests.

"But we cannot check on everyone," he said. France's leftist government has publicly supported the student cause and Education Minister Claude Allegre is due to present new school spending plans in parliament Wednesday.

"We must satisfy the students' demands and I

believe we will," the minister told TF1 television.

However, in a country where student movements have sometimes spun out of control, most famously in 1968, ministers hope that Tuesday's strike will be the last and that calm will return to the classrooms after next week's half-term holiday.

The latest round of demonstrations kicked off far away from mainland France, on a territorial island in the Indian Ocean.

Authorities said around 1,400 students marched through the capital of Reunion to demand better schooling.

On the mainland, more than 10,000 students rallied in the southwestern city of Bordeaux while thousands more turned out in the northwestern city of Rennes.

Demonstrations were also reported in Avignon, Toulon, Toulouse, Lyon, Marseille, Rouen, Metz, Montpellier, Nîmes, Nancy and Aix-en-Provence.

For the first time, teachers marched side by side with their pupils, backing the students' call for smaller classes and an overhaul

of the national curriculum. Student groups hope that, like last week, around half a million youths will take part in the demonstrations, with the biggest protest again expected to be staged in Paris.

Police cleared parked cars overnight from the route of the Paris march and have urged shopkeepers to bring down their shutters ahead of the demonstration, which is due to start at 2 p.m. (1200 GMT).

About 150 people were arrested after bands of youths, many from tough suburban housing projects outside Paris, went on the rampage last Thursday, looting shops and overturning cars.

The spontaneous student movement emerged three weeks ago in the south of France and quickly spread. Last Thursday's rallies were the first to be organised on a national level.

An opinion poll released Tuesday continued to show overwhelming public support for the high school protest with 83 per cent of people questioned in a BVA survey backing the students' demands.

NEWS IN BRIEF

British and Irish PMs to meet on N. Ireland arms

LONDON (AFP) — British Prime Minister Tony Blair will meet Irish counterpart Bertie Ahern for private talks at an EU summit this weekend in a bid to unlock the Northern Ireland peace process. In a brief telephone call Tuesday, they arranged for an informal summit in the Austrian town of Poertschach. Blair's official spokesman said the two had agreed there were difficulties about disarming paramilitary groups but also noted "a common determination to overcome them." Northern Ireland First Minister David Trimble and Sinn Féin's number two Martin McGuinness met Blair for separate talks Monday in an attempt to break the deadlock over decommissioning. Trimble insists the IRA must begin disarming before Sinn Féin can sit on the incoming power-sharing executive envisaged by the April 10 peace accord. Sinn Féin says it has a right to sit on the executive anyway and cannot be blamed for any lack of progress on disarmament. "With determination, we are confident it can be done, but it does require us to work out a way to move it forward," Blair's spokesman added.

Tension in Kashmir town after rebels kill two soldiers

SRINAGAR, India (AFP) — Indian security forces conducted sweeping searches in a Kashmir town Tuesday after Muslim militants shot dead two army soldiers, police said. Tension prevailed in the town of Pattan, some 30 kilometres north of the state summer capital Srinagar, after the two men were killed on the town's main road in the afternoon. Police said the killers used pistols fitted with silencers. They said the murder sparked immediate panic in the crowded area with shoppers running helter-skelter and businessmen closing their shops. Security troops then launched house-to-house searches and forced residents to line up on the streets to identify the suspected killers. Masked informers scanned through crowds to identify suspected rebels, witnesses said adding the town was tense. Last month, two border guards were killed in Pattan when militants bombed their bunker, sparking a similar search. The latest killings came ahead of a visit to Kashmir by U.S. Ambassador to India William Celeste on a fact-finding mission. Celeste, who arrived in Kashmir late Tuesday, is scheduled to meet with Kashmiri separatist leaders, politicians and state officials, including chief minister Farooq Abdullah. This is Celeste's first visit to Kashmir after he took over from his predecessor last year. Since the outbreak of armed insurgency in Kashmir in 1989, U.S. officials and diplomats have visited Kashmir several times. The Muslim separatist drive has claimed more than 25,000 lives in the state since then. India accuses neighbouring Pakistan, which administers part of the disputed state, of fomenting insurgency in Kashmir. Islamabad denies the charge.

Remains of tsar's two missing children found

MOSCOW (AP) — Archaeologists may have found the remains of Tsar Nicholas II's two missing children, solving one of the lingering mysteries of the Russian Revolution, a newspaper reported Tuesday. The tsar, his family and their servants were executed on July 17, 1918, in the central Russian city of Yekaterinburg, and their bodies dumped in an unmarked pit until they were unearthed in 1991. After seven years of investigation and genetic tests, they were buried in St. Petersburg in July. But the remains of Alexei, the haemophilic heir to the throne, and one of his sisters — either Maria or Anastasia — were missing. Anastasia's name was on one of the coffins this summer and investigators say forensic tests lead them to believe the missing remains are those of Maria. An independent archaeological expedition has spent two months searching for the two children's remains at the site where the bodies were buried by the Bolsheviks after the executions, Moskovsky Komsomolets reported Tuesday. Researchers have found four topaz beads of the kind that had been presented each year to Maria on her birthday, and some bones believed to be remains of Alexei and Maria, said forensic expert Sergei Nikitin, who took part in the expedition. The archaeologists have also found several bullets, which had apparently got stuck in the jewellery sewn into the girl's corset, he said, according to the newspaper. The Bolsheviks had to use bayonets to finish killing the women because the jewellery caused some of the bullets to ricochet or get stuck.

Infamous Japan suicide spot sets dismal record

TOKYO (R) — Japanese police Tuesday reported finding three people hanged in a thickly wooded area near famed Mount Fuji, bringing to a record 58 the number of apparent suicides there this year. In addition to the confirmed deaths, around 40 people were believed to have attempted suicide in the forest this year, a police spokesman told Reuters. Most of the incidents involved hanging. Last year, 55 bodies were found in the same place, a dense stretch of woods on a cliff located northwest of Mount Fuji in central Japan, the spokesman said. The place became famous after a notorious suicide guidebook several years ago named it as an ideal place to commit the deed. "I can't say for sure why so many killed themselves, but increasing financial problems due to the poor economy can't be ruled out completely," the police spokesman said. About 350 police officers and firefighters participated in a search of the area Tuesday in an annual event conducted before the onset of winter.

'Waiting for Godot' tops 20th century play poll

LONDON (R) — Samuel Beckett's "Waiting for Godot" was voted the most significant English language play of the 20th century in a poll for Britain's Royal National Theatre that was released Tuesday. The state-funded company polled over 800 playwrights, actors, directors and journalists to pick the century's top plays. American Arthur Miller was the most dominated playwright, closely followed by Britain's Harold Pinter and Ireland's Nobel prizewinner Samuel Beckett. Beckett topped the individual play poll with "Waiting for Godot" followed by Miller's "Death of a Salesman" and Tennessee Williams' "A Streetcar Named Desire."

Thief returns 'wrong' wheel covers

RAAMSDONKSVEER, Netherlands (AP) — The hub cap heist had an ill-fitting — but happy — ending. After discovering recently that a thief had removed her car's wheel covers, a woman from this southern Dutch village the daily De Telegraaf reported Tuesday. Until this week, that is, when the hub caps were anonymously returned to their owner with a note saying: "You're lucky. They didn't fit." The woman's name was not reported by the newspaper.

Media protest over missing journalists in Kosovo

MAGURA, Yugoslavia (AFP) — More than 60 Yugoslav and foreign journalists working in Kosovo held a protest Tuesday at the disappearance of a Serb reporter and a photographer working for Yugoslavia's official news agency.

Nebojsa Radosevic and Vladimir Dohricic vanished while on their way Sunday to Magura, 30 kilometres to the south of Kosovo's capital of Pristina, where two Serbian policemen had been reported wounded in an attack by ethnic Albanian rebels.

At the crossroads near Magura, where the two were seen last, reporters put their cameras and equipment on the ground and held a

minute of silence protest "in the hope that the colleagues are not dead."

Monday, the journalists signed a petition for the protection of media employees, saying that the "free speech is a human right, and human rights apply to all sides."

"Two journalists disappeared Sunday. Today it happens to them, tomorrow it could happen to any of us. If it happens to you, you would hope that at least some of your colleagues would care. Let us show that we care," the petition said.

Serb journalists avoid going to areas where they might fall into the hands of the ethnic Albanian rebel Kosovo Liberation Army, which

still holds some areas of Kosovo.

The journalists also called for help from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Adem Demaci, the political representative of the KLA, which is suspected of detaining the two missing journalists.

The ICRC also approached Demaci who promised to ensure that the pair were treated properly if they were in the hands of the KLA. ICRC spokesman Josue Anselmo said.

At the end of August a Serb reporter for Radio Pristina, Djuro Slavuj, and his driver, Slavko Perenic, disappeared in southwestern Kosovo in the Orshovac.

Efforts to find them have been unsuccessful.

Russian activist stands trial on nuclear secrets leak charge

SAINT PETERSBURG, Russia (AFP) — A Russian environmentalist went on trial Tuesday accused of high treason for exposing the dangers caused by nuclear submarines in a litmus-test case for human rights and freedom of speech.

Alexander Nikitin, a retired navy captain turned ecologist, faces charges of espionage and leaking state secrets for his probe into the environmental hazards posed by Russia's northern-based submarine fleet.

A troika of judges finally kicked off hearings Tuesday morning after a three-year investigation, led by the KGB successor agency the Federal Security Service (FSB).

The probe has raised serious questions over Russian justice, particularly where it clashes with so-called state interests. Rights observers and western watchdogs have slammed the investigation into Nikitin as heavy-handed and riddled with flaws.

Outside the court Tuesday a huddle of picketers brandished placards saying "Free Alexander Nikitin" and "The environment is not the KGB's sphere."

Nikitin, 45, arrived for the trial looking less confident than he has in recent weeks, and appeared nervous as he sat with his lawyers listening to the 90-minute opening remarks.

The accused told the court he was concerned that the security services could try

and intervene in the proceedings against him.

"I do not rule out the possibility of the special services putting pressure on the judges because they were obliged to have the permission of the FSB to take part in the trial," said Nikitin.

Presiding judge Sergei Golets then ordered the 200 journalists and rights observers present to leave the court before the indictment was read out, a tell-tale sign of the sensitivity of the case and the state secrets it supposedly involves. The judge finally adjourned the case until Friday when the first witnesses are expected to give testimony.

A former officer in the nuclear submarine corps, Nikitin was arrested in

February 1996 as part of an FSB probe into the activities of Norwegian environmental group Bellona in the Arctic Circle port of Murmansk.

He was charged with espionage and held for 10 months for his part in the publication of a Bellona report on nuclear pollution on the Kola peninsula, the principal base of Russia's fleet of nuclear submarines.

The FSB accused Nikitin, a former Bellona staffer, of using his officer's identity card to gain access to a military unit stationed in St. Petersburg, where he allegedly consulted top secret documents.

Nikitin's lawyers argue that all the information published in the Bellona report

had already been made public previously.

But it is the manner of the investigation as much as the highly sensitive material it deals with that has provoked a furor and caused consternation in the West.

Nikitin was harassed repeatedly following his release from detention in December 1996. The FSB for its part has been forced to change its charge sheet six times, a sign of the weakness of its case, according to the Nikitin side.

The Council of Europe meanwhile complained that the case had been undermined by secret decrees and flawed expert assessment.

"This is all about ecological issues, human rights and

freedom of speech," said Bellona spokesman Frederic Haug before the trial.

Haug added that Russia would only be able to start thinking about cleaning up a region littered with nuclear reactors and waste dumps when society and the authorities had learned to deal openly with issues exposed by ecologists.

The charge of high treason theoretically exposes Nikitin to a maximum death penalty, though in practice the activist is likely to face up to 20 years in jail if convicted. The court is expected to deliberate for several weeks on the case. It can either acquit or convict the accused or bounce the case back to investigators.



Georgian pro-government soldiers sit on a truck as they move in Georgia's second city of Kutaisi. Regional authorities said Tuesday they had regained full control of Kutaisi after a day-old mutiny by army troops who returned to base. Their leader Akaki Eliava fled with some of the soldiers, Georgian television reported (Reuters photo)

All quiet in western Georgia after mutiny

SENAKI, Georgia (R) — Western Georgia was quiet Tuesday after forces loyal to the government put down a mutiny by an armed column of troops.

Soldiers at the tank barracks in Senaki where the mutiny began Monday said four of 11 hijacked tanks had been returned overnight.

The former Soviet republic's second largest city, Kutaisi, and the nearby towns of Khomi, Samtredia and Senaki were all under government control, although the whereabouts of the mutiny's leader, Akaki Eliava, were not known.

It was also not clear how many of the 200 mutinous soldiers had returned to barracks.

Georgian state television said Eliava faced treason charges.

The mutineers launched the rebellion in the early hours of Monday morning, heading towards Kutaisi in a column of hijacked tanks and

armoured vehicles. They clashed with loyalist troops in Khomi after President Eduard Shevardnadze ordered Kutaisi to be defended at all cost.

Eyewitnesses in Khomi said there had been a brief battle at a bridge late on Monday afternoon. A government spokesman in Tbilisi said at least one soldier had been killed and two injured.

By Tuesday morning there was no sign of confrontation.

Police occasionally stopped passing vehicles to search for weapons, but the atmosphere was calm. About 100 government soldiers were billeted at an abandoned building in Senaki. A handful could be seen on the street chewing sunflower seeds, boxing with each other and talking.

At the barracks where the mutiny began, a soldier said the mutineers were mainly conscripts who were ordered by commanders to set off early Monday morning without knowing why.

The soldier, who did not give his name, said the only reason his crew did not join them was because their tank would not start.

"They told us we were going on an exercise," he said. "We didn't have bullets in our guns." Georgian officials, including Shevardnadze, have suggested the sudden mutiny was organised to thwart plans to build a large oil pipeline through western Georgia.

An international consortium announced immediately that it was suspending work on a smaller pipeline that is almost complete. The decision on where to build a larger main pipeline is due to be announced later this month.

Proponents of alternative routes, such as a new pipeline through Russia, have tried to portray Georgia as unstable, and Georgian authorities have accused them of sponsoring unrest in the country in the past.

"We have been doing everything possible to solve prob-

lems with construction of the pipeline for five or six years and they are trying to interfere with that," Shevardnadze said Monday.

Eliava commanded a revolt in 1992-93 by nationalist supporters of Georgia's ousted first post-Soviet president, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, who died in mysterious circumstances during the rebellion in 1993.

Many of Gamsakhurdia's supporters have never reconciled themselves to Shevardnadze's rule. Political stability has eluded Georgia since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Two regions say they are independent.

But Shevardnadze, a former Soviet foreign minister, has restored civil peace and economic growth to most of the country since the mid-1990s and disarmed the followers of powerful warlords. He has escaped several assassination attempts.

Pinochet case sparks diplomatic embarrassment

LONDON (AFP) — The arrest of Chile's ex-dictator Augusto Pinochet has caused diplomatic embarrassment in London, Washington and Madrid as well as a legal tussle over any extradition to face genocide allegations.

According to the Guardian daily, Washington is urging Britain not to allow his extradition to Spain for fear of revelations over any U.S. role in the 1973 coup that brought him to power.

Britain is also in a quandary, because Chile was one of its few friends in Latin America during the 1982 Falklands War, lending logistical support.

The Spanish government has not hidden its embarrassment either over a case that could damage its valuable diplomatic and trade links with Chile.

Amid pressure from human rights groups for Pinochet to face his accusers, Chile's ambassador to Britain, Mario Arzaga, warned that his arrest put his country's transition to democracy in peril.

The 82-year-old former strongman remained under guard at a private London hospital Tuesday, four days after his arrest while he was recovering after a back operation.

His arrest followed a request by two Spanish judges who want to question him over allegations of genocide, torture and terrorism relating to 94 specific cases during his dictatorship.

More than 3,000 people were executed, murdered or disappeared during his rule, according to figures published after democracy was restored.

He enjoys immunity in Chile under a clause which he had written into the constitution. Several human rights groups called Tuesday on the British government to launch its own investigation into Pinochet so he could be judged here if the extradition to Spain falls through.

The organisations, including Amnesty International, urged a probe under a 1988 law that says London can pursue anyone accused of torture even if it was committed abroad.

They are questioning Pinochet's role in the disappearance of a 27-year-old Briton, William Beausire, who was tortured after trying to flee Chile a year after the coup.

Meanwhile the Guardian said there were around 400 U.S. "advisors" assisting Pinochet before his coup and in the subsequent wave of repression.

However the Foreign Office denied it had been in touch with Washington on the Pinochet case.

Pinochet was also a long-standing acquaintance of former British Premier Margaret Thatcher. Her office confirmed Tuesday that he had visited her two days before his operation.

A spokesman said they had seen each other "a number of times over a period of 18 years."

The two forged strong links in the Falklands war when Pinochet allowed the elite SAS to use Chile as an unofficial base.

Baltasar Garzon, the Spanish magistrate leading the case against Pinochet, for-

mally asked Britain for permission Monday to travel to London and question the ailing general.

He alleged Pinochet had ordered the kidnapping or assassination of U.S. and British nationals as well as from Argentina, Spain and other countries.

Any extradition request must be approved by the Spanish government and be made within 40 days of his arrest.

In a sign of the fallout from the affair, Chilean President Eduardo Frei cancelled a visit to Madrid Monday because of a "full timetable" embassy officials.

Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar Sunday demanded "prudence and responsibility" in the affair, because it "affected not only people but many different sensibilities in each of the countries."

In London meanwhile, Arzaga told BBC radio that Chile was trying to solve the problem "amicably."

However he warned that the affair "does not help the transition that has been applauded all around the world as a model."

He said the government of Chile, the foreign ministry and himself had the duty "to carry out our internal organisation which is now here in jeopardy," noting a "difficult" transition from dictatorship to democracy since 1990.

Chile has sent a foreign ministry lawyer to London to help Pinochet, whom Santiago insists enjoys diplomatic immunity as a life senator.

Seoul lifts ban on imports of Japanese movies, cartoons

SEOUL (AFP) — South Korea Tuesday announced a partial lifting of a half-century-old ban on imports of Japanese cultural goods, allowing Tokyo's movies and cartoons into the country immediately.

"The market will be immediately opened from this moment on to the imports of Japanese movies and cartoons," Culture and Tourism Minister Shin Nak-Kyun told journalists.

"But imports of Japanese culture must meet standards put forth by the (South Korean) government," she said, adding that Japanese cultural goods will be treated on an equal footing with any cultural imports from other countries.

The move was in line with President Kim Dae-Jung's pledge that he made during his visit to Japan early this month that Seoul will lift a decades-old ban on Japanese popular culture.

The ban has remained intact since Korea was liberated from the 1910-1945 colonial rule by Japan despite the fact that South Korea normalised ties with Japan in 1965.

"The cultural action that the government is taking now signifies the beginning of a mature relationship between the two countries progressing on the basis of a consensus among the two peoples," a ministry statement said.

It said the Asian economic crisis required Japan and South Korea to "cooperate closely to ensure regional stability and development" and to boost cultural ties ahead of their co-hosting of the 2002 soccer World Cup.

In addition, it said, it was "not natural to place a ban on one country" in an age of globalisation and world competition. But Tuesday's move does not mean that every Japanese movie will necessarily be allowed into South Korea.

As far as films and videos are concerned, only winners of awards at film festivals in Cannes, Venice, Berlin and the Academy Awards will be

allowed into the country, as well as joint venture products between the two countries.

Only cartoon magazines and single-volume cartoon books which do not form part of a series will be permitted.

"The government will open gradually and in phases, starting with those fields which are less related to the unhappy past of the two countries and which are of high cultural value," Shin said.

She dismissed concerns over the possibility of the country being flooded by "indecent" and violent products from Japan, citing the existing censorship and procedures needed to obtain import permission.

The two countries will set up a joint consultative body to help solve administrative problems and push for cultural exchange, she said.

The consultative body will discuss details for allowing imports of games, broadcasts and music.

Sources at the ministry said it would take about one year before Japanese animated films, broadcasts, games and music will be able to hit the market here.

The ministry said public consensus was needed to open the floodgates to Japanese culture and that it should be introduced in phases and on the basis of reciprocity.

In addition, cultural exchanges "in the most sensitive areas" in the "unhappy history" between the two countries should be postponed to allow public sentiment to come to terms with the idea.

South Korea's culture has for decades been fairly restricted, especially to products from Japan towards which Koreans still feel enormous resentment as a result of Tokyo's 1910-45 rule here.

Kim, following his landmark visit to Japan early this month, urged South Koreans to look to building a strong relationship with their neighbour in the 21st century, rather than looking to the past.

'Candle in the Wind' score to be sold for charity

LONDON (R) — The score for "Candle in the Wind 97" — the world's best-selling single that Elton John sang at Princess Diana's funeral last year — is to be sold for music charities.

Sir George Martin has donated the score of his arrangement for the song that sold 33 million copies worldwide. It is to be auctioned by Sotheby's in New York in December.

"It was the fastest bit of writing I have ever done on a day that I will always remember," said Martin, the producer known as "The Fifth Beatle"

for his collaboration with the British pop group.

Elton John went straight into a studio to record the tribute after singing it at Princess Diana's emotion-charged funeral service in Westminster Abbey.

"I had no pre-conceived ideas about the arrangement so I took the precaution of booking a string quartet and a couple of woodwinds for the late afternoon. I set about writing hastily a score for the musicians," Martin said in a statement Tuesday.

Afghan opposition says aid flights can resume

ISLAMABAD (R) — Afghanistan's anti-Taliban opposition said Tuesday aid agencies could resume their suspended flights to the capital Kabul on fixed days and times without having to fear rocket attacks.

"There is no problem from our side," Engineer Arif, a spokesman for opposition commander Ahmad Shah Masood, told Reuters. "They can start flying to Kabul at any time. We guarantee their safety, but only at certain times in a week."

Juan Martinez, a spokesman for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), said Monday the aid agency had suspended flights to Kabul after an increase in rocket attacks on the airport by opposition forces dug in 25 km north of the capital.

He said the ICRC would resume flying to Kabul only after the opposition gave guarantees that it would not attack the airport when aid agencies were using it for their flights.

Kabul airport, which is controlled by the Taliban, is used for both military and civilian flights.

The opposition had previously given assurances it would not fire at the airport during designated time slots when aid agencies were scheduled to bring in supplies or passengers. But Sunday a rocket landed inside the airport perimeter just minutes after an ICRC plane had left.

"We have not violated our commitment," Arif said.

"The ICRC had themselves suggested that due to security reasons, when and if there is heavy fighting they will not use the airport," he said.

Arif said aid agencies could use the Kabul airport from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. every Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday.

The surge in rocket attacks came amid intensified fighting on several fronts between the Taliban, whose forces hold Kabul and more than 90 per cent of the country, and Masood's forces, which control some areas north of the capital and nearly two provinces further north on the border with Tajikistan.

Arif said that due to the frequent use of the airport by the Taliban air force in the past four days, the opposition had

no choice but to fire at the airport. More than eight civilians have been killed and several others wounded by missile attacks in the past four days.

On other fronts, Arif said there had been heavy clashes north of the strategically vital Salang tunnel, some 120 km north of Kabul on the road to the north of the country, as the Taliban tried to cut opposition supply lines to Masood's stronghold in the Panjshir valley.

He said more than 100 Taliban were killed in the fighting and many more wounded. There has been no independent confirmation of Arif's reports and Taliban sources have refused to comment.

Masood, who served more than four years as military chief of the ousted government before being driven out from Kabul by the Taliban two years ago, is the last major obstacle in the militia's drive to gain complete control of Afghanistan.

His forces recaptured the northeastern town of Taloqan Monday, the third time the town had changed hands in three days.

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Yeltsin at work in Kremlin; magazine reports he's seriously ill

MOSCOW (AP) — President Boris Yeltsin, who is still recovering from a respiratory infection, returned to the Kremlin Tuesday and reaffirmed he would not seek reelection.

During a meeting with Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov, Yeltsin reiterated that he had no intention of running for a third presidential term in 2000.

"I have said so many times that I will not run in 2000," Yeltsin said.

"But they have brought it to a point where this is being reviewed by the Constitutional Court. I will not run, so why are you tormenting me?" he said in a firm voice to reporters covering the start of the meeting.

Russia's constitution appears to rule out another term for Yeltsin, but presidential aides have said that his first term began before the constitution was adopted, and therefore should not count towards the two-term limit.

Despite Yeltsin's repeated

denials of any intention to run, the parliamentary opposition has asked the court to rule on the issue. Hearings began last week.

The president and his doctors insist that Yeltsin will serve out the rest of his term, and adamantly deny speculation that he has serious health problems — a suggestion that is raised every time Yeltsin catches a cold.

But the influential magazine Itogi quoted top Yeltsin aides in its Tuesday issue as saying the president is seriously ill and his staff is trying to "pull the president through" the remaining 20 months of his term.

Much of that time will be taken up by parliamentary and presidential election campaigns, as well as Christmas and New Year celebrations and summer vacations.

So "the president will not particularly interest anybody," Itogi quoted an unidentified Kremlin aide as saying.

But this "scheme for turning the president into a political

ghost" may be derailed by political opposition or the worsening economic crisis, Itogi said.

"So pulling the president, like a cotton-wool mattress, over the remaining year and half, will likely fail," Itogi said.

During the meeting with Yeltsin, Primakov also denied suggestions that he planned to run for president in 2000.

"This is nonsense and has nothing to do with reality," Primakov said. "I would not be able to head the government now if I was thinking about the presidency."

Tuesday, Yeltsin also discussed the government's measures to pay state workers' back wages and pensions during a meeting with Primakov and other officials, the ITAR-TASS news agency reported.

Yeltsin also met with Interior Minister Sergei Stepashin, head of the Federal Security Service Vladimir Putin, and Border Guards chief Konstantin Totsky. ITAR-TASS reported.

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Immunity corrupts

IN A remarkable demonstration of the independence of the judiciary, the public prosecutor has sent nine public officials implicated in the water crisis to court. The nine officials were charged with negligence resulting in polluted water from the Zai Water Treatment Plant being supplied to the public in violation of several relevant laws. The fate of three former ministers who could possibly be implicated in the water crisis, however, was left to Parliament to decide on. While no immediate obstacles prevent the trial of the nine employees, any attempt to indict former ministers must go through constitutional channels.

According to the Constitution, ministers can be brought to justice before the nine-member Higher Council of senators and judges from the highest court of the land, but only after a two-thirds majority of the Lower House indicts them. Under such legal constraints, it would be almost impossible to effect prosecution of former ministers by the prosecutor general.

This is not to belittle the judicial move and political will to also make ministers answerable to the public. This unprecedented step is indeed a milestone in the annals of the judicial branch and demonstrates that the determination of the head of the Judicial Council, Taher Hikmat, to render the judiciary truly independent is bearing fruit. Yet this fresh start in making our court system independent and effective cannot be completed without introducing some amendments to the Constitution to lift the current legal constraints in a bid to make high officials accountable.

The first order of business in this vein is to establish a Constitutional Court to replace the existing Higher Council. Trials of ministers, however, should be a matter for the courts in which other citizens are tried. People can very easily abuse their office if they knew that at the end of the day, they are almost immune from prosecution.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Tareq Masarwah expressed his anger about the atrocious rumours about His Majesty King Hussein's health and the future of the Kingdom. The writer said the King has seen off more than eight American presidents in his time in power, and can see off more. Masarwah rejected the news that the United States and Israel are currently discussing the possibility of opening the Israeli border with the occupied West Bank to facilitate Jordan's exports after the allegations about the King's condition. The King has witnessed many disasters but has always managed to come out stronger than before, said Masarwah, and added that Jordanians are looking forward for the day when the King returns to his home in good health.

Al Ra'i's Fahed Fanek denied rumours that Jordan has tense relations with all Arab countries and said that Jordan enjoys good relations with 18 Arab countries. Jordan has tense relations only with its neighbours, Syria, Relations with Lebanon and Kuwait are murky, but ties on the Lebanese side can become normal if the relations between Amman and Damascus improve. Fanek rejected that the reason for the bad relations with Syria is the peace treaty with Israel. He said signing the treaty was an implementation of the Arab strategic option entailing isolated dual contact with the Jewish state. Fanek said that even the Syrian minister of foreign affairs, Farouk Sbaraa, called for independent talks with Israel. The Syrian leadership itself seeks peace with Israel provided there is a complete withdrawal from the Golan Heights, said Fanek.

Washington Watch

In an election votes are power

Dr. James Zogby

THIS YEAR'S election will be decided by voter turnout. At the end of the day that is all that counts. With all of the emphasis that modern political campaigning places on raising huge amounts of money, buying television advertising and hiring high priced political consultants and media advisors, the final verdict is up to the voters. And the measure of the effectiveness of all of the money spent and the advisors hired is determined by how many votes they produce.

In what is expected to be a year of low voter turnout, a handful of voters will make a difference in a number of congressional and Senate races.

The same has been true in past elections as well. In 1994, for example, the year the Republicans swept control of the Congress and the Senate, 41 congressional races were decided by a combined total of only 34,000 votes! Some congressional elections that year were decided by a few dozen votes.

In such a political setting there are lessons to be learned. Small voter groups, if organized, can become a decisive force in determining an election's outcome. Even a group that comprises only one per cent of total voters in a district can use their vote as leverage in a close election.

The prominent American sociologist, Seymour Martin Lipset, understood this fact and used it to explain the political power of the Jewish community in the United States. Writing some 15 years ago in a pamphlet entitled "The Political Future of American Jews," Lipset noted that among other factors, Jews were politically powerful because their population was concentrated, they were organized and they voted in numbers larger than the national average. Lipset pointed out that the high Jewish turnout combined with an overall low voter turnout often times resulted in doubling the strength of Jewish voters in some states.

This was a lesson that Reverend Jesse Jackson sought to apply to African American voters. Jackson's campaign for

the presidency in 1984 had one specific goal — to increase African American voter registration and turnout so as to increase the community's leveraging power in national politics.

Jackson's targets were major U.S. cities and the southern states of the United States. His success was phenomenal and the results were immediately apparent. In 1984, for example, the African American voter registration and participation in New York City surpassed that of New York City's Jewish voters. In southern states, as well, the number of African American voters swelled.

In the 1986 Senate election, Democrats regained control of the U.S. Senate, which they had lost in the Republican Reagan sweep of 1980 — the reason was due to the dramatic increase in African American voters in the South. In every southern state where Democrats won, they lost the white vote to Republicans (who usually won by a 65% to 35% margin). The fact that 95 per cent of the African American voters went to the Democrats provided the margin for victory. And in the next few years, African American candidates won historic victories: A governor in Virginia, a mayor in New York City and a Senate seat in Illinois, to name a few.

There is a lesson here for Arab Americans as well. A study compiled by the Arab American Institute (AAI) demonstrates that in 55 congressional districts Arab American voters comprise between one to four per cent of the vote total. This year, 11 of these congressional districts will feature some of the United States' closest races.

In 1996 AAI's exit polling data showed that the Arab American vote turnout was 61 per cent. This was significantly higher than the national turnout of 49 per cent. With this year's turnout expected to be in the low 30 per cent range, an Arab American response of only 50 per cent can increase the community's numbers to 1.6 to 6 per cent of the vote in these 55 districts.

What will be required for this to occur is an intensified

community effort to turn out the Arab American vote on Election Day.

Already efforts are in place in several states. Arab American and Muslim American organisations have met to plan a coordinated approach.

Television, radio and newspaper ads have been prepared for Arab American media outlets. Staff has been hired, phone banks have been set up and Arab American voter lists have been prepared for some targeted districts.

The effort, at this point, is not candidate specific or partisan — it is simply an organised effort to get out the Arab American vote to enhance the community's role in U.S. politics at least in some key targeted areas.

This exercise is vital. I've argued before that Arab Americans are vulnerable to civil rights violations and defamation precisely because they are perceived as weak. And U.S. policy is biased and skewed by double standards because of the imbalance in domestic U.S. politics.

U.S. policy is a function of what politicians think will win votes or lose votes on Election Day. Politics is, therefore, central to Arab Americans finding their rightful place in the U.S. policy debate.

Organising and mobilising a community's voters has worked for American Jews and African Americans. More recently, it has been effectively utilised by Asian Americans and Armenian Americans and it can work for Arab Americans as well.

Already Arab Americans have been recognised as an important constituency in Michigan and Ohio politics — but as the community continues to grow in numbers and strength there are strong possibilities for Arab American clout in Illinois, New Jersey, Virginia and California.

Our community's slogan this year is "Our vote is our power, on November 3rd let's use it." On November 4 as we assess the Arab American exit poll data and the results in several important congressional races it will be clear how effectively Arab Americans were in using their power.

AS THE THREAT OF AIR STRIKES LOOMS, MILOSOVIC TAKES A CALL FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES....

LATER THAT SAME DAY ON SERBIAN TELEVISION....



LETTERS

Speak out against savagery

To the editor:

I WOULD like to express how distressed I was when I read the news about the savage murder of a 20-year old woman by her father (Jordan Times, October 18) for "reasons of honour." I noticed that no comments were made about the justifications of such actions. It somehow gave me the impression that this barbaric behaviour is justified simply because questioning it is portrayed as challenging both to religion and tradition.

Many of us are disobeying the laws of the Koran and the Bible everyday. We lie, we steal, and we swear. For such actions we are not sentenced to death. Why is a woman who commits adultery, sentenced to death and rejection without even being tried or proven guilty.

Sex and sexuality is a taboo in Arab and Islamic countries. Women are assumed not to have any feelings or desires. Sexuality simply exists for reproductive purposes. As a biological scientist myself, I can tell you that science and logic have proven otherwise. Women have needs and physical desires. Some of us, however, are able to resist temptation, because we are trained that way and from childhood are drilled with the importance and purity of chastity. Some women on the other hand are unable to control their desires and do end up committing adultery. Others are abused or raped by members of their family or by strangers.

Either way, a woman who commits adultery is looked down upon and

ostracised by both family and society. Who are we to sentence them to death? Why are men committing the same sin not persecuted in the same way? When are we going to start thinking about the essence of our religions and the beauty and divinity of the holy books rather than taking them to the edge. Will this father be sentenced for his actions? Is anyone investigating whether this young woman, if not a virgin at the time of her death, had been raped by her own father? Is anyone ever going to break the ice and start defending abused and battered women in Arab and Islamic cultures? Many women are raped by their own husbands before they are married. Is it fair to sentence them all to death. Is anyone ever going to speak out for them?

Dima Sakka,
 MSc PhD student at the
 Institute of Medical Radiation
 and Cell Research,
 University of Wuerzburg,
 Germany.

Clean up your own backyard

To the editor:

ACTUALLY I think that both the Spanish and the British have a lot of nerve to blame anyone for murdering or oppressing their opposition! It was the Spanish and the British who ruled the Americas, Africa and the Middle East with an iron fist until they stripped the citizens of those continents of their natural resources and their dignity. Every drop of loot that they took back to their "boly

kingdoms" carried the blood of the people they persecuted and finally exterminated like insects, in the case of the Americas.

Dyer forgot to mention that! Dyer also forgot to mention how Pinochet rid Chile of Salvador Allende. Allende was a communist who planned to destroy Chile the way Fidel Castro has destroyed Cuba for the past 40 years. I think that the people of Jordan deserve to bear from both sides and it's high time they were stopped being fed pro-British propaganda! Yes, Pinochet didn't take anti-government activities too well. Yes, maybe he was a tough ruler, but maybe that's what his country needed at the time. Allende's communism was a fast growing cancer that needed to be stopped. Thank God for Pinochet, the chemotherapy, who killed it at its root! How dare Spain and the U.K. interfere in another country's national or international policy! How dare they order anyone's arrest! Will they ever get used to the idea that they no longer call the shots! Will they ever realise that Spain is nothing but a poor country now and England an island with a high unemployment and poverty rate? Just look around you, you will find Spanish and British citizens working all over the world, because their countries can't offer them prosperity.

Hey Dyer, look in your own backyard! How does your country treat those who oppose its government? How does England treat Indians, Pakistanis, Arabs, Africans and Northern Ireland? Those who have a glass roof should not throw stones!

Marina Sanchez-Rashid,
 pines55@hotmail.com

Do we stand a chance in agriculture?

This is part two of a three part series examining Jordan's agricultural prospects. Khairuddin Shukri is the Chairman of Jordan's Exporters and Producers Association for Fruits and Vegetables.

PERHAPS IT is high time for both the private and public sector to sit down and identify a strategic plan to get our objectives together. We will not be able to survive, if we do not communicate what we have to offer and make a firm commitment to abide by such a plan. Previous experiences have seen producers and exporters taking short-term, low-risk attitudes to the domestic markets, rather than medium-term, higher-risk approaches to export markets. This is a direct result of past government policies of price support for certain crops (tomatoes, onions, etc.) and import restrictions.

We have totally ignored the competitive and comparative advantages of the Jordan Valley for too long. The government, for example, is protecting the production of bananas in the Valley. It is a crop that requires 1000 litres of very good quality water per kilogram of produce. It is not a labour intensive crop, and if it was not for the heavy duties and taxes imposed on imports (420 fils per kg) nobody would grow it. If we imported this crop, the water saved from a single kg of bananas would produce five kilograms of green beans, and without duties, Jordanian consumers would pay 50 per cent less for bananas.

Green beans are in high demand with European consumers. A single kilogram of fresh beans will yield a return of JD1.6 in hard currency of which 800 fils goes to the farmer, 600 fils to the transportation sector (airline and inland), 100 fils for labour, and 100 fils to the packaging industry. The same applies to scores of crops using the comparative advantage of producing summer crops in the winter months in the Valley. The markets are there, but it will take a lot of sincere efforts and hard work to get to them. That is why exports to western Europe did not exceed one per cent of total exports by weight, despite the fact that their share in export value is eight per cent, underlining both the interest and the potential for further penetration into these markets. I happen to be one of the lucky few to get established

and survive in the U.K. market. It is a matter of complying to specifications and standards down to the smallest detail. As important as quality standards for different crops there are standards for employees, packaging, hygiene, residues, etc. As a country, we have a long way to go to achieve such standards. In 1996 the Agricultural Marketing Organisation (AMO) established standards for packhouse, produce, refrigeration, cold storage, and packaging. When they tried to enforce them all hell broke loose, and two weeks later they backed off. AMO was established in the first place to act as a regulatory body of the government. The agricultural industry will not be able to survive without rules, laws, standards, and regulations. We are still at a crossroads as to who can be counted as a fresh produce exporter and what qualifications qualify a producer as such for the purposes of proper licensing. Right now, anyone can become a fresh produce exporter, and this will continue as long as we do not have standards.

The Jordan Exporters and Producers Association for Fruits and Vegetables were overwhelmed to see Jordan adopting a policy of trade liberalisation, and its consequences: the conclusion of the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement, the accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), and the Free Trade Agreement which was concluded with the countries in the region, thereby gradually phasing out import duties over a period of ten years. The question again is: can we as producers and exporters survive without enforcement of rules, laws, standards, and specifications on both exports and imports? It is not the exporter that will pay the price for a violation, but the country, is AMO capable of inspecting and enforcing specifications and standards? The produce belongs to the exporter until it reaches the border and after that it is the reputation of Jordan that is at stake. Can we private and public sector both keep products impeccable without specifications and standards?

Thursday, October 21, 1998

Dr. James Z...

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we stand
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culture?

part two of a three
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cultural prospects
reddin Shukri is
an of Jordan's Expe
ducers Association
its and Vegetables

By Suzanne Goldenberg

Heart of darkness

AN ANCIENT retainer eases off a giant padlock and the shutters swing inward. A gust of air exits, and with it the smell of dust and unwashed bodies. Here—in a mud hut hardly high enough for a man to stand, and bare but for a grubby mattress or two, children's exercise books, and a few rusting tins—is where it all began: the movement that swirled out of the southern desert to take almost the whole of Afghanistan, and redefined for the world the parameters of militant Islam.

For the followers of the Taliban, literally students, the abandoned hut within the mud walls of a medressah, or religious school, in Sanghisar village is practically hallowed ground. The village, about a 40-minute drive north of Kandahar city, marks the spot where a lowly village preacher, Mullah Mohammed Omar, began his rebellion against corrupt warlords.

Four years on, the once-obscure Taliban controls 90 per cent of Afghanistan and Mullah Omar has been crowned its supreme spiritual authority: Amir-ul-Momineen—Commander of the Faithful. Kandahar, the provincial backwater where he makes his home, has emerged as the real seat of power, rather than the Afghan capital, Kabul, and it is the cauldron of the Taliban's experiment to build the world's one true Islamic state.

That is where certainty ends. Despite its dramatic rise, little is known about the inner workings of the Taliban, and even less about the all-powerful Mullah Omar, aged about 39, making him like most of Afghanistan's rulers, who are in their twenties and thirties. He is a virtual recluse, appearing in public only rarely, and travelling with dozens of gunmen in a convoy of six deluxe 4x4s with darkened windows. He has visited the capital only once, and communicates to the world through a handful of trusted intermediaries.

Such opacity goes a long way towards explaining the frustration of Western countries and the United Nations in dealing with the Taliban. "It is difficult to know whether he takes part in political affairs," says one Westerner who is familiar with Kandahar. "Most people say he is piloting a project of building an Islamic society. He is a kind of Pope figure and most of the political decisions are handled by others." But for the people of Sanghisar, a sprawling village that grows corn and grapes, he remains accessible. "Before, he was leading our prayers," says Wali Jan, a farmer who has had audiences with the Amir in his fortress in Kandahar city.

"Now he is a very high person, but he still recognises me," Mullah Omar visits the village every few months, stopping at the grave of a fallen comrade, and at his in-laws. Guljana, the second of his three wives, whom he wed as a teenage bride in 1995, is from Sanghisar.

The attachment to the village is crucial to an understanding of the Taliban, because for the mili-

tia, true Islam is manifest in the tribal codes and customs of their native Pashtun villages of southern Afghanistan. Most Afghans live in villages, where the literacy rate is almost zero.

As in Sanghisar, village homes are walled compounds. The more prosperous families have their own mosques within the high, baked-mud walls. Women rarely venture out alone. If they do, they cover themselves completely in the chaderei, viewing the world through a tiny slit in the panel over their eyes. "If I want a dress, if I want bangles, if I want earrings, I ask my husband to bring it from the bazaar," says Malika.

"Why should I go out? If I don't like what he brings, I ask him to go again." However, even at Mullah Omar's Sanghisar medressah, devotion is tempered by practicality. The medressah is deserted because the teacher, like the other students, has gone off to the war against the last opponents of the Taliban. A few of the tiniest boys wander with explosive fuses clutched to the chests of their grubby embroidered tunics. In a group effort, they manage to scrawl half of the Kalima, the Muslim profession of faith, in the dust of the wind-screen of our car.

Like Mullah Omar's old hut, the few buildings are made of mud brick, slathered over with mud plaster. The roofs are of branches and twigs, and the only decorations are drawings of mosques in coloured pencil and machine-gun bullets, slung from the rafters. The sole sign of the medressah's temporal importance is the arrival last year of a new, concrete mosque which stands on the spot where Mullah Omar once prayed.

"We are proud of him, it is like the sun is always shining on us," said Mohammed Hassan, a straggly-bearded 20-year-old whose uncle originally hired Mullah Omar. In return, the villagers are spared some Taliban excesses. Several of the men sport trimmed goatees or are clean-shaven—which are punished with beatings in Afghan cities as un-Islamic. They are also spared the forced conscription suffered by other villages of Kandahar province.

As the village elders of Sanghisar tell it, Mullah Omar arrived in Kandahar province from his native Uruzgan province shortly before the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979. As the eldest son, he was responsible for the livelihood of a large, impoverished family after the death of his father, and had been wandering Afghanistan in search of a living at a village mosque.

When war arrived, he fought against the Russians on behalf of the man who has become his main

opponent, Burhanuddin Rabbani, the exiled self-styled president of Afghanistan. His legend began with the rocketing of his mosque by the Russians.

The preacher was wounded in the eye. He felt the blood trickling down his face and knew the eye was lost. So he reached into the socket, clawed out the useless eye and threw it to the ground. In 1989, the Russians left and Mullah Omar retired to the mosque. "He was a man of few words who would come early in the morning and lead prayers, and then take tea and sit until noon studying the Koran alone," says Mohammed Hassan. "He didn't talk much—only to his friends." The war didn't end with the Soviet retreat. Instead, Afghanistan's greatest tragedy unfolded: a civil war between brutal and corrupt military commanders who subjected their compatriots to murder, robbery, and rape. By the early 1990s travel was a nightmare. Each commander set up his own checkpoint, extorting huge sums from travellers. If they couldn't pay, they were tortured or killed. One favourite tactic was to order a man to lie beneath a vehicle raised by a jack. Then the car would be lowered on his prone body.

Amid the lawlessness and chaos, Mullah Omar had a dream, a vision of a pure, Islamic state. He gathered eight of his closest comrades, all men of Kandahar or Uruzgan and in May 1994 they attacked their first checkpoint on the highway that runs near the village. What followed was a series of remarkable victories for a ragged force recruited mainly from the medressahs among Afghan refugees in Pakistan, where young men were assimilating the same unbending creed as Mullah Omar.

The people credited the power of Mullah Omar's visions. "Before he attacks some place he dreams, and then in the morning he orders a commander to attack that place," says Mullah Nida Mohammed, his wife's uncle.

Only it was never that simple. Aside from their faith, the Taliban had potent supporters, Pakistan, which wanted a pliant, but lawful, Afghanistan to secure its trade routes to Central Asia, provided the "three Cs"—command, control and communications. Saudi Arabia, which approved of the Taliban's vision of a purified Afghanistan, provided the funds.

The Saudi chief of intelligence, Prince Turki Al Faisal, has been a regular visitor to Kandahar and, say analysts in Islamabad, the Saudis financed the Taliban's latest offensive which saw the rout of their opponents from their last stronghold in the

northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif.

Four years and many victories later, the Taliban have accomplished their original mission of ridding Afghanistan of its rapacious commanders, and in guaranteeing physical security. Mullah Omar has left his home in Sanghisar for a high walled compound in Kandahar's Shahar-i-nau (New Town). The humble mosque of Sanghisar has given way to the Amir-ul-Momineen Jihadi (Holy War) Medressah, established in a former German-built technical college next door to Mullah Omar's house. It is one of three medressahs in the city founded by him.

The house was built last year by the millionaire Saudi renegade who is Washington's most wanted man: Osama Ben Laden. Only Mullah Omar's closest followers have been inside the house that Ben Laden built, where the Commander of the Faithful lives with his three wives, five sons, and one daughter. The youngest son, born just a few months ago to his third wife, is the sole survivor of twins. When he does communicate with the outside world it is through his original disciples, now in his bodyguard or important commanders; the Governor of Kandahar, Mullah Mohammed Hassan; or his trusted spokesman and confidant, Maulvi Wakil Ahmed Mutawakil. He has met only a few journalists: Afghans and Pakistanis fluent in his native Pashtu and Arabic. He has never met a non-Muslim reporter, or a woman.

The Taliban say he is too busy "because he has to do all the work," according to Abdul Hai Murmain, director of information in Kandahar. "Military, political, social—all tasks of the country fall on him." Instead, the Taliban disseminate his decisions or views through a single Afghan reporter, whom they refuse to name, who is constantly at his side.

His in-laws say he is little changed from the tall and silent man they first met. "When he came to the village, he would not sit on a mattress, he would just come and put his chaderei (the sheet men carry on their shoulders for use as a prayer mat) on the bare earth," said Mullah Nida Mohammed, Guljana's uncle.

However, the few educated people of Kandahar see the Taliban as upstarts. "Now they are government men, they have very good vehicles. They have very good homes. Every Taliban now has three or four women. Before this time, they were not giving women to the Taliban for their wives," said Rahimullah, a businessman. "Now they have power, everyone is giving them women as their wives." Two centuries ago, the city was the seat of Ahmed Shah Abdali, the first Afghan king to unite

the warring Pashtun tribes. Some local people see the Taliban as a symbol of Kandahar's destiny to rule Afghanistan.

Such dreams of grandeur live on in the south-west of the city, where workmen scramble over the wooden scaffolding of a mosque dome in a huge complex rising on the fringes of the Shahi Shih desert. The walls of the compound measure several square miles. This too is a gift to the Taliban from Osama Ben Laden.

But the Taliban have not done much else for Kandahar, and are still preoccupied by war. The city remains a backwater where huge clouds of dust swirl down the unpaved main roads.

Much of it is in ruins. The water supply was restored last year, and last month electricity returned to some parts of the city.

There are only five functioning boys' schools—none for girls—and the rest offer only religious instruction. Near the tomb of Ahmed Shah Abdali, workmen gouge out the foundations for a shopping centre to replace the old market.

For the Taliban, civic amenities come third: behind the war, and their project to introduce village ways into urban life.

Kandahar is at the forefront of their efforts to impose Sharia, or an Islamic code of justice. This is the only place in Afghanistan where the Taliban have carried out the punishment (for adultery: stoning to death, and for homosexuality, burying alive five male couples. Two men survived. In the last month, six men have been executed for murder, shot by the relatives of their victims.

Such punishments have caused revulsion abroad—although they are practised with relatively little comment in Saudi Arabia—but the Taliban's Minister for the Prevention of Vice and the Propagation of Virtue is untroubled by doubts. Earlier this year his office was upgraded to a full ministry, a sign of the importance the Taliban attach to this social experiment.

People who try to argue with us or think we are on the wrong track are not aware of the Hadith (the sayings of the Prophet) and the Holy Koran," says Mullah Wali. "Those ulama or scholars who criticise us are under the control of governments where they cannot tell the truth." He says he has spent half of his life studying Islam. He is aged 35.

For educated, urban Afghans, especially those of Tajik, Hazara, or Shia ethnic communities, the Taliban restrictions represent a culture shock: the imposition by force of Pashtun village ways. "We don't have the right to cut our beards, we don't have the right to wear trousers, we don't have the right to go to a park with our wives and our families," says a teacher in the northern city of Herat, Afghanistan's most cultured city. "This is not life, this is no life. We are just walking and then we go to the grave."

—The Guardian

Global Village

To hell-and-back horror stories from Nigeria

Recently released former head of state General Olusegun Obasanjo said jail conditions in Nigeria were the worst in the world. Now that most prisoners have been freed their stories are revealing just how much they suffered.

By Cameron Duodu

GENERAL SANI ABACHA, the Nigerian head of state who died in June, has been called a "lunatic" by Kunle Ajibade, editor of The News Magazine published in Lagos jailed by Abacha for no other offence than that he published details of an alleged coup plot.

The enormity of the suffering inflicted on him in prison for this non-offence, convinced him that the man in whose name he was tortured could not have been sane.

Whether Abacha was a lunatic or not is now irrelevant. What is amazing is that in almost all cases the people who actually carried out the tortures are still at their posts.

The new Nigerian leader, General Abdulsalam Abubakar, was asked, at his first world news conference in Abuja, what he intended to do about the suffering endured by the prisoners. His answer was that those concerned could institute civil actions against those who abused their human rights.

The scores of testimonies that have surfaced since Abacha's jails began to open indicate that if Abubakar's advice is followed, hundreds of civil actions could ensue.

Two of the most notable Abacha detainees can no longer avail themselves of such actions: Chief Moshood Abiola, winner of the 1993 presidential election, and General Shehu Yar'Adua, deputy head of state under General Olusegun Obasanjo between 1976 and 1979. Both died in detention.

But Obasanjo, jailed for the same alleged coup plot as Yar'Adua, did survive and could conceivably claim millions of naira from prison authorities.

Quite a few of Abacha's detainees were not politicians, but merely happened to be related by blood to people Abacha did not like. One such was Wole Diya, younger brother of General Oladipo Diya, Abacha's deputy head of state (who would have been executed for alleged treason if Abacha had not died).

The story Wole Diya told, on release from seven months in jail, is one of

the worst of the horror stories yet told. He said: "I saw hell. I was detained along with 67 others, both military and civilian, at Abuja. Each time there was the call of nature, and any of us wanted to go, the guards would give that person six strokes of the cane."

"There were these two officers, both of whom worked for my brother. In their case, permission to visit the toilet attracted 12 strokes. Our hands were chained, even when we wanted to eat."

Kunle Ajibade's story is just as gruesome: "They dumped me in one of their cells in the Directorate of Military Intelligence headquarters, where I stayed for a week. All the louvers were broken."

"Before I got there, they had kept some civilians there for punishment and they had urinated in the cell and it was stinking... I was there from morning till night for one solid week... Later on, when I started complaining about the mosquitoes and the terrible conditions of my cell, one soldier said I should consider myself lucky and that I was in a kind of (luxurious) Nicon Noga Hilton Hotel in Abuja."

The soldier added: "Dai Tell 'magazine' man (assistant editor George Mbah) na him know wetin dem dey call cell now o!" (Pidgin English for: "It is he who knows what a bad cell is really like!")

Ajibade was later transferred to the "real cell" the soldier had talked about. "When they opened the door," Ajibade revealed, "you would think that you were in one of these out-of-the-way rooms in an 18th century house."

"They had built this iron railing before you even reached the padlock. Inside, they had to ask somebody to dress up and get out of the way. The person was lying on the stinking floor like a dead man."

"It turned out to be George Mbah. On the bare floor. That's where they pushed me into, too. Barely three hours later, they also brought Ben Charles Obi (editor of the *Classique* newspaper)."

"It was a damp place. That time, it was raining heavily in Apapa. No light in there. And because of the dampness, the mosquitoes were just too many. We were in there for about a month before I collapsed. I was just vomiting blood."

"So they had to take me to the military hospital. There I was sleeping in handcuffs and chained to the bed."

Chris Anyanwu, publisher of The Sunday Magazine, was also jailed

merely for reporting that there had been a coup attempt against Abacha. On her release she was asked whether she had been allowed to listen to the radio while she was in prison.

Anyanwu replied: "What radio? Radio is forbidden in prison. Television is forbidden. Newspapers are forbidden. Even most types of books are forbidden, unless they are religious books and other types of inconsequential books. In Kirikiri prison in Lagos, they gave me books about Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother of Great Britain."

Chief Olabiyi Durojaiye, of the National Democratic Coalition leadership, said: "It is a case of mental and physical quarantine. I was quarantined, put in seclusion and locked up day and night."

"That was the case for the first 11 months. When I pressed that birds, lizards and ants are enjoying the free air of God whereas I, as a human being, was locked up in one room day and night, they allowed me to come out for three hours each day."

Chief Frank Kokori, of the Petroleum Workers Union, also said: "I was taken to a prison in the desert—Bama Prison in Borno State where there was intense heat."

"My pains were aggravated because of the extreme weather conditions. I could be extremely hot but also very cold at other times. For four gruesome years I was in solitary confinement."

The prisoners' all made a point of thanking those people, especially foreigners, who took the trouble to write to them in prison and send them books and other gifts. All said such kind gestures kept their spirits alive.

Questions: Is all this torture necessary just to enable an individual to retain power at the expense of his fellow citizens? When will it become possible for an African ruler to think of himself as just another citizen, with the same equal rights as all other citizens, and stop using them as if they were his personal toys?

Hopefully, as many torture victims as possible will follow Abubakar's advice and take their torturers to court. Exposing them to the public glare, and perhaps relieving them of every cent or kobo they possess, is one of the few ways to make sure people will learn that being put in charge of fellow human beings on behalf of a political regime does not give carte blanche to treat them like animals.

—Gentini News



Refugees from Kosovo preparing tea in a refugee camp. Camps in Switzerland are 'overflowing' with refugees and men are forced to sleep outside on boxes (file photo)

Kosovar refugees pouring into Switzerland face grim conditions

By Gilles Laffon
Agence France Presse

SWITZERLAND, A magnet for asylum seekers, is swarming with refugees from the Serbian province of Kosovo in one of the biggest influxes of its kind this decade.

Some 26,000 asylum hunters—three quarters of them Kosovars—have poured into Switzerland since the Serb military crackdown against ethnic Albanian separatists clamouring for Kosovo's independence began in March.

In September, 4,581 requests were made and authorities are bracing for 5,000 in October.

Refugee holding centres are overflowing, fathers are sleeping outside in plummeting temperatures and cantons are complaining about having to handle "economic refugees."

The director of the federal refugee office Friday estimated that caring for the refugees would cost around two billion Swiss francs (\$1.5 billion) this year. The outlay is seen as a burden in a time of cantonal budget cuts.

The Swiss press Friday featured front-page photos showing refugees pressed against the gates of registering centres which are lined throughout the country. In Geneva, where the army has quickly

reopened some barracks to help house the new arrivals, the daily newspaper *Le Temps* denounced what it called the "crass egoism" of communities reluctant to receive the foreigners.

The German-language paper *Blick* expressed "shame" over the lack of beds for the refugees, using the metaphor "full ship" which was employed during the World War II to signify that the country could not take in people fleeing Nazi persecution.

Swiss news agency ATS gave a hard-nosed description of conditions in a centre at Kreuzlingen, in northern Switzerland. "Security agents patrolling around the place, during the night the zone is surveyed by infrared cameras and dogs to prevent the men, kept out of the centre and shivering from cold, from rejoining their families by jumping over the railings."

"Excrement piles up around the centre and the fathers of families forced to leave their destroyed houses, sleep nearby on boxes," an ATS journalist wrote.

Federal authorities admit to being surprised by the numbers of families who left their province before the concessions promised by Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic to avert a NATO military strike.

Refugee office spokeswoman Vera

British said the flood could last several weeks more.

The army could, with an administrative nod from government, improve logistics and make more facilities available to the refugees.

Neighbouring Italy has no shelters to house families and in any case most of the asylum seekers want to be in Switzerland.

The Kosovar community in Switzerland, totalling about 150,000 residents, is second only to that in Germany.

Asylum seekers applying in one European country cannot make a similar request in a second EU member state, which makes Switzerland an attractive alternative.

In 1991, during the Bosnian war, Switzerland had a record number of 42,000 refugees. The presence of so many outsiders led to 77 "xenophobic" attacks.

On Tuesday evening, a bomb exploded at a military barracks in the eastern Swiss town of Brunschofen which was geared up to greet refugees.

Switzerland, which is due to hold a referendum in several months on whether to harden its asylum policy, recently proposed bolder an international conference on the refugee situation. The proposal has so far not been taken up.

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Senior banker calls for benefiting from European experience in banking-insurance operations

AMMAN (J.T.) — Deputy governor of the Central Bank of Jordan, called for benefiting from the European experience in the area of cooperation between banks and insurance companies in order to provide advanced services in the Jordan market and to raise the effectiveness of the national economic activity. Addressing a seminar on the scope of joint action between banks and insurance companies, Mustafa said banks have entered the insurance industry in Europe since the mid-80s and, subsequently, "we should benefit from this experience."

He added that despite the practical details of the law that governs the banks and the insurance companies differ from one country to another, it is generally understood that anyone who deals with the banks and the insurers should stay within the parameters of his own organisational system (agency). Mustafa pointed out that the most common forms of partnership at present is the "distribution alliance" which means that banks operate as agents on behalf of the insurance firm by benefiting from their branch network.

Based Hindawi, director of the Insurance Control Directorate at the Ministry of Industry and Trade, said the banking operations and the insurance operations are the basis of the financial sector and a strong insurance market is a fundamental element in the development of the financial sector. He emphasised that an effective organising system is a basic demand to develop the insurance market. "Yet, updating the organising capability requires updating the legislations and providing the necessary authorisations to carry out these tasks," Hindawi noted.

Hindawi pointed out that the government is currently working on an ambitious programme to modernise the financial sector in

order to consolidate the legal and organisational capability for the concerned parties which supervise the branches of this sector which covers banking, insurance and capital markets. "Such a programme would enhance the efficiency of the branches, consolidate their competitive capabilities and provide a better service to the consumer," he said.

The insurance director revealed that a detailed study about the insurance industry in Jordan has shown that the legislations related to supervising insurance operations are still ineffective and also lacking efficient organisational measures in addition to qualified cadres to supervise insurance operations.

Hindawi said that the reform programme related to the insurance sector has started. "This should persuade the local insurance companies to carry out internal reform to be in line with the requirements of the next stage," he stressed highlighting also the option of merger as a strategic choice to boost financial capabilities to be able to confront local and international challenges.

Hindawi said that although the Jordanian insurance market is small, there are 27 companies competing in a limited market as its size is only around JD100 million and the share per person does not exceed JD20. He indicated that the share of the insurance market in the gross domestic product was less than two per cent compared to five per cent in many countries and 11 per cent in advanced insurance markets.

He concluded that the focus of the insurance companies is on general insurance operations noting that life insurance did not exceed 17 per cent of the total insurance in Jordan whereas the percentage reaches 50 per cent in developed countries (Al Rai + Al Dustour).

Thomas Cook to merge with Carlson U.K.

LONDON (R) — Carlson Companies Inc. will merge its U.K. leisure-travel businesses with British travel agency and financial services company Thomas Cook, creating one of the world's largest leisure and travel firms, the companies said.

Carlson and Thomas Cook owner Westdeutsche Landesbank will co-own the new venture, which will have annual sales of close to 25 billion pounds (\$42 billion) and employ more than 20,000 staff. It will operate under the Thomas Cook name, and Westdeutsche will have a majority stake.

The new company will carry more than 2.5 million package holidaymakers a year, operate a fleet of 32 aircraft and serve customers through a combined network of 800 travel shops nationwide and through three call centres.

As both parties are private companies, financial terms were not disclosed.

WestLB will contribute Thomas Cook's worldwide businesses including its travel businesses in Canada, Australia and India and its worldwide financial services businesses. Carlson will contribute its Carlson Worldwide travel agencies, its 18-plane Caledonian and Peach Airways charter fleets and its tour operations which include Inspirations.

London again elected Europe's business capital

LONDON (AFP) — London remains the top European capital ahead of Paris and Frankfurt, as judged by top business executives of large companies in a poll published by British real estate agency Healy and Baker.

London was voted the top city for the ninth year in a row by the heads of 500 firms, who considered six criteria: easy access to markets, internal and external transports, quality of telecommunications, language, and available office space.

"To be voted top in Europe's leading location survey for nine years running is an impressive endorsement of London's

Italian institution to study ceramic sector in Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — Present and future trends in the ceramic sector in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon will be the focus of a study to be readied by year-end under an agreement recently signed between the Italian Trade Commission (ITC) in Amman and the consulting Company for Construction and Maintenance of Industrial Projects (CCMIP).

According to the agreement, which was signed on Oct. 12, the study, to be financed by ITC and carried out by CCMIP will concentrate on the evaluation of ceramic production including ceramics, tiles, bricks, sanitary fittings, and crockery products.

A statement issued by ITC and obtained by the

Jordan Times Tuesday said the study will analyse supply, demand, actual and expected production investments.

The study will also investigate the problems facing the ceramic sector, while suggesting strategies based on the results of a field survey and available desk work information in the three countries.

ITC said the agreement with CCMIP came as part of assistance and services it provided to local companies as well as to Italian companies operating in the region.

ITC recently opened an office in Shmeisani following an official approval granted by the Council of Ministers in late September.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
BOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHMEISANI											
TELEPHONE: 5607171 / 5607179											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR TUESDAY 20/10/1998											
PART 12 MONTHS HIGH	COMPANY'S NAME	P/E	DIV. %	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF TRANSACTIONS	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	LAST PRICE	CHANGE	PERCENTAGE	PERCENTAGE
355,500	170,000	ARAB BANK	16.6	99	66	2900	58873	205.00	202.75	2.25	-1.12
1,920	1,500	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	12.3	4.64	10	9112	13758	1.52	1.51	0.01	-0.66
3,200	1,000	BANK OF JORDAN	8	0.00	1	1000	1040	1.05	1.04	0.01	-0.96
1,300	850	MID. EAST INV. BK.	56.5	0.00	2	223	823	0.85	0.84	0.01	-1.20
6,510	2,610	THE HOUSING BK.	17.0	3.72	48	58364	159001	2.80	2.69	0.11	-4.11
800	530	JOR. GULF BANK	9	0.00	4	4000	2260	0.57	0.57	0.00	0.00
3,950	1,590	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	16.1	0.00	2	500	791	1.59	1.58	0.01	-0.63
1,220	900	UNION BK. SAV. INV.	9	0.00	2	250	233	0.90	0.92	0.02	2.15
BANK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 266.53 CHG: -1.32 134 76376 766178											
2,850	1,840	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	7.4	9.43	2	350	928	2.65	2.65	0.00	0.00
1,310	1,080	HOLY LAND INSUR.	8.1	0.00	2	8124	8773	1.10	1.08	0.02	-1.82
2,200	2,050	WILLAMSWORTH INSUR.	16.5	0.00	2	10053	20609	2.15	2.05	0.10	-4.76
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 127.95 CHG: -0.08 7 18527 30310											
3,800	1,550	IRISIO ELECTRICITY	11.4	5.41	5	1660	3024	1.80	1.85	0.05	2.70
1,270	620	MATL. PORTFOLIO	26.3	0.00	6	2150	1419	0.66	0.66	0.00	0.00
1,590	260	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	9	0.00	1	100	27	0.26	0.27	0.01	3.85
4,600	1,870	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	9.3	2.13	3	3000	5640	1.88	1.88	0.00	0.00
1,790	1,060	UNITED CO.	4.8	10.19	6	2788	3012	1.08	1.08	0.00	0.00
1,350	1,080	UNION FOR FINAN. INV.	1.3	6.12	1	250	263	1.11	1.05	0.06	5.71
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 104.17 CHG: 0.00 23 9983 13406											
4,110	1,110	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINER.	11.1	0.00	10	2300	2465	1.11	1.05	0.06	5.71
6,500	3,530	ARAB POTASH CO.	17.4	5.67	3	1250	4413	1.52	1.53	0.01	0.66
11,250	10,050	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.0	8.60	5	510	5272	10.32	10.34	0.02	0.19
7,350	5,500	JOR. MOISTURE MFG.	7.3	3.57	38	2650	14840	5.55	5.60	0.05	0.88
8,740	2,400	ARAB PHARM. MFG.	6.9	3.00	38	30509	82650	2.53	2.69	0.16	6.11
2,940	2,650	JORDAN DAIRY	5.9	10.48	2	1267	2358	2.70	2.65	0.05	1.89
2,890	1,750	JOR. PAPER CARBON	11.6	0.00	1	200	410	1.95	2.05	0.10	4.88
6,350	4,700	DAR AL-KHAYR DV. TRV.	6.1	6.88	12	2800	14288	5.13	5.09	0.04	-0.78
530	350	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	12.2	0.00	10	2250	810	0.36	0.36	0.00	0.00
3,720	1,880	GENERAL INVESTMENT	15.0	3.03	1	1000	3300	3.25	3.30	0.05	1.52
1,470	1,250	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	9	0.00	2	1350	675	0.52	0.50	0.02	-3.70
410	320	NATIONAL TRD.	9	0.00	1	300	117	0.41	0.39	0.02	-4.76
540	280	ENTERED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	5	4750	1395	0.30	0.30	0.00	0.00
1,680	370	JOR. SULPHO-CHRM.	7.0	0.00	3	1850	667	0.37	0.37	0.00	0.00
1,470	1,250	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	12.8	5.17	6	3000	3498	1.17	1.16	0.01	-0.86
1,260	530	DRIV. MOTOR IND.	9.6	10.00	6	2400	1441	0.61	0.60	0.01	-1.59
890	480	JOR. IND. RESOURCES	9	0.00	2	1300	637	0.49	0.49	0.00	0.00
1,560	1,200	MATL. CHEMISTRY	8.4	8.33	1	250	300	1.22	1.20	0.02	-1.67
1,560	1,150	EL. & ELEC. MACH. WEAR	41.9	0.00	6	2161	2560	1.20	1.19	0.01	-0.86
1,310	910	INTL. TOBACCO	7.3	5.61	8	1300	1352	1.04	1.04	0.00	0.00
1,220	860	UNION CH. & VEG.	10.0	0.00	2	125	114	0.92	0.91	0.01	-1.10
890	660	JORDAN STEEL	9.8	7.95	10	35900	31592	0.88	0.88	0.00	0.00
730	580	MAT. ALUMINIUM	32.2	0.00	8	1950	1268	0.65	0.65	0.00	0.00
670	520	MID. EAST COMPLEX	9.4	0.00	3	4000	2080	0.52	0.52	0.00	0.00
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 71.72 CHG: -0.51 151 108922 180499											
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 160.69 CHG: -1.05 315 213808 990392											
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR TUESDAY 20/10/1998											
1,050	790	EXPORT & FIN. BNL-75%	10.0	0.00	3	21100	11394	0.79	0.79	0.00	0.00
1,000	700	JOR. INT. INSURANCE CO	8	0.00	1	500	1005	0.85	0.81	0.04	-4.76
950	730	ARAB INSURANCE	8	0.00	1	250	193	0.73	0.77	0.04	5.45
490	270	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	9	0.00	1	500	150	0.30	0.30	0.00	0.00
790	500	UNION INV.	9	0.00	1	195	102	0.52	0.53	0.01	1.96
620	420	ARAB FIN. INVEST.	9	0.00	11	35250	7755	0.22	0.22	0.00	0.00
2,220	1,000	CENTURY INV. GROUP	9	0.00	2	500	535	1.05	1.07	0.02	1.89
430	200	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	23.0	0.00	6	3100	420	0.20	0.20	0.00	0.00
580	220	MATL. BUILDING ENG. WARE	41.9	0.00	6	6750	1516	0.22	0.23	0.01	4.76
500	350	ARAB ELEC. IND.	9	0.00	1	150	53	0.35	0.35	0.00	0.00
690	480	MID. EAST PHARM. 90%	9	0.00	11	8550	3254	0.49	0.48	0.01	-1.59
2,160	1,290	UNION TOBACCO 87.5%	13.4	5.95	3	412	812	2.10	2.10	0.00	0.00
320	190	INDOS. ENG.	7.9	0.00	13	14650	2930	0.20	0.20	0.00	0.00
660	300	INDOS. CERAMIC	7.9	0.00	1	250	75	0.30	0.30	0.00	0.00
950	530	ADVANCED PHARM. IND.	8	0.00	2	800	432	0.54	0.54	0.00	0.00
600	450	WATER SUP. P. CONV.	8	0.00	2	7350	1911	0.26	0.26	0.00	0.00
1,310	690	NUTRIDAR	8	10.67	2	12364	8600	0.69	0.68	0.01	-1.49
1,000	690	AL-KHAYR PRINTING CO	10.8	10.67	2	3450	2450	0.70	0.71	0.01	1.43
GRAND TOTAL 85 116126 43086											
* New 12 months low * Stock dividend during the past 12 months * Listed during the past 12 months * P/E ratio is 100 or more * Negative P/E * Earnings is zero or N/A for the most recent year											

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19)

A partnership venture is still in your thoughts. You're wondering how the other person will perform, and the feeling is mutual. Don't leave it to chance. Outline what responsibilities each of you will take. If you learn to be structured and are willing to stick to the structure, you'll find you can accomplish much more.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20)

You're pushed to do another person's bidding. If this is someone you trust, no problem. If not, make your break quickly. You can tell whether this person is trustworthy by whether you flourish in the relationship. If you're being empowered, you know you're in the right place at the right time.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21)

It's hard to settle down to business. There's somebody you'd rather talk to. Schedule a conversation for tonight, but keep mum while the workday is in progress. It's crucial to focus on your job right now, and do it well. Somebody's watching, and would like to give you more responsibility. Make it look like you can handle it.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21)

You're so much in love lately it's hard to think about anything else. People may notice you're preoccupied, but that's OK. Anyone who knows you, knows you have a good reason. Conditions in effect encourage intimate conversations, so make sure you set the stage. If you have to take the kids to Grandma's for the evening, that's fine. Whatever works.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21)

Something around your place is not quite the way you want it. You don't have enough money to buy new, so you have to build it, or fix it, yourself. This is true with relationship issues as well. Building a new deck may be easier than talking about a problem, but you can learn how to do both.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22)

You've got an incredible ability to assimilate information, and right now you're going into a monster learning phase. Do a little planning, to make the most of it. Make your lists and start checking out the schools that teach what you want to learn. This is your opportunity to jump up to the next level.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22)

It's often difficult for you to make a decision. That's because most of life doesn't come in black and white, and you do see lots of shades of gray, and all the other colours, too. Well, the moon in Scorpio makes you more decisive. As more things go into Scorpio, it'll get even easier. Give it a try.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21)

You're decisive, forthright, bold, and damned good looking, but the best is still to come. There are odds and ends to be rearranged, organized or tossed out, and an old fear to lay to rest. You've worried long enough. It's time to make the decision. You'll be amazed to find that the rest of the world falls into place.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21)

You may feel like you're in a squeeze play. You can either resist or go along with another person's programme. If that programme isn't heading you in the right direction, come up with one of your own. One thing is for sure. You won't be able just to sit around and pretend nothing's happening.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20)

A group you're working with is almost more fun than it ought to be. You could get distracted from the path at hand. So what? You're one of the most conscientious people on Earth. You hardly ever let yourself wander off, especially when there's work to be done. Today, make sure all major deadlines have been met, then go play.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You're still facing tough scrutiny, but you might as well get used to it. If you can get a partner to help, your life will be a lot easier for the next couple days. You want somebody who is better at public speaking, so you can pass questions on to him or her.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Conditions are favouring travel, especially travel by water. If you can't actually take a cruise, you could go somewhere near the water. How long has it been since you planned a big fishing trip? It's time to start thinking along those lines. You're pretty lucky right now, so you might even get your heart's desire.

Birthstone of September: Opal — Tourmaline

Tyson given go-ahead to get back in the ring

LAS VEGAS (AFP) — Former world heavyweight champion Mike Tyson's license to box was reinstated here Monday, more than a year after he was banished from the sport for biting Evander Holyfield's ears.

The Nevada State Athletic Commission, the sport's governing body in this state, voted 4-1 to reinstate Tyson's license after hearing testimony from the fighter himself, his wife, a panel of psychiatrists and sports legends Muhammad Ali and Magic Johnson.

"I'm just happy to be here," a relieved-looking Tyson said after Monday's hearing, which was a continuation of six-hour proceedings on September 19.

Tyson, who still must file the standard application form to receive a new license, said he didn't know how soon he would box, although there have been reports that financial pressures will prompt him to fight before the end of the year.

"I'm undecided right now," Tyson said of the timing of his next fight. "I have a lot of things I have to work out now. I don't know if I'm prepared to fight this year."

The hearing was continued from September at the request of the five-man commission, and Tyson was asked to submit to in-depth psychiatric evaluation at an institution of the commission's choosing.

Five of the six doctors who saw Tyson at Massachusetts General Hospital were present on Monday.

"We believe he will be able to handle himself in the ring," said psychiatrist Ronald Schouten.

Schouten said the examination of Tyson showed that he had some difficulty controlling anger and recurring bouts of depression, but that he could address his problems in psychotherapy. "No one — no lay person, no mental health professional — has a crystal ball," Schouten said when asked if he could guarantee there would be no repeat of the gruesome events of July 1997, when Tyson was disqualified for hitting both of Holyfield's ears in their world title rematch.

"For the most part, Mr. Tyson can control his anger and irritation. He has resources to conduct himself in a reasonable manner," he added.

Tyson, 32, was animated throughout the hearing, often touching his wife, Monica Turner Tyson, affectionately or turning to look at various speakers. He described his banishment, and the laborious appeal for reinstatement, as "torture".

"There's nothing wrong with me," Tyson told the panel at one point. "I'm at your guys' mercy. Please



Former heavyweight boxing champion Mike Tyson (R) shakes hands with former heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali (L) following the Nevada State Athletic Commission's decision to reinstate Tyson at their hearing in Las Vegas, Nevada. Ali's wife Lonnie read a prepared statement from Ali supporting Tyson's return to boxing (AFP photo).

don't torture me any more, sir."

Tyson, who rambled a bit but was largely composed and relaxed, again alluded to the fact that when he bit Holyfield, he was responding to what he felt at the time, were unfair headbutts by his opponent that referee Mills Lane failed to penalize.

"At that particular time, I had no awareness that it was a prize fight," Tyson said, saying that in his mind he reverted to the street-fighting mores of his youth. But he said he wasn't trying to put the blame on Lane or Holyfield.

"As far as saying this would never have happened, no. I'm the only one who has to carry the weight," Tyson said. Tyson, whose career in the ring has already been disrupted by three years in prison for rape, acknowledged many shortcomings, but he said he wasn't mentally ill.

"I know who I am," he said. "I'm no schizophrenic. I'm no manic-depressive. But I am what I am. I can't change that."

Women's rights activist Anne Golonka, who has protested Tyson's return to the ring ever since he emerged from prison, was angry that no opposing tes-

timony was heard.

"I'm bitterly disappointed. There was absolutely no negative testimony given at all," she said. "No one said he shouldn't be allowed to box. It was totally one-sided and no-one advocated the other position."

Of the commissioners, former American football player Glenn Carano, Luther Mack, Lorenzo Fertitta and chairman Elias Ghanem, voted in favor of the motion to restore Tyson's license. Commissioner James Nave, a hard questioner in both hearing sessions, voted against.

On September 19, several commissioners were worried by assault charges pending against Tyson in Maryland, where two men accused him of hitting and kicking them over a minor traffic accident.

Tyson addressed those charges on Monday. He said he yelled at the drivers, but did not physically attack anyone.

"It was a big ugly scene," Tyson admitted. "I said things I shouldn't have said. They probably were afraid, this big, black guy ... I did screw up."

But he denied charges that he hit one man and kicked another in the groin. Monica Turner Tyson said

she thought her husband "overreacted" in Maryland, but she said she did not see him strike anyone.

One of the most persuasive witnesses was former basketball star, Earvin "Magic" Johnson. A friend of Tyson for years, Johnson said he hoped to be able to help Tyson learn to manage the proceeds of future fights.

"Mike needs people in his life who have been through what he's been through athletically," Johnson said. "He also needs people he can respect."

Ali, perhaps, commands Tyson's ultimate respect. Although he has not been a close friend of Tyson over the years, he prepared a statement in support of the younger fighter which was read by his wife, Lonnie.

"There are only a few punishments worse than being denied a chance to earn a living..." wrote Ali, who was banned from the ring for refusing armed service in the Vietnam War. "Give him a chance to redeem himself in the ring."

The commissioners were ready to do that, but with stern warnings.

"Mike, most of your problems are of your own making," Ghanem said. "You have to take responsibility for your own life."

Weah ready to quit AC Milan

MILAN (AFP) — AC Milan star George Weah, upset with new coach Alberto Zaccheroni's system of play, is ready to move elsewhere.

Weah, who joined Milan in 1995 and was World Player of the Year in 1996, has been replaced as centre forward this season by German Oliver Bierhoff.

But the man known throughout Italy as "Big George" is struggling to play wide on the left in an attacking trio and admitted: "Perhaps I'm not the player that Zaccheroni needs."

"I'm not playing in my natural position and it's too difficult for me to be where Zaccheroni wants me," Weah said. "I'm trying to help the team, but I'm just not managing it. Out there on the left, I'm no use to anyone."

"I haven't scored a goal yet... I'm playing where I'm not needed and where I only risk being an embarrassment."

He went on: "I get the feeling we are wasting our time. I'm speaking for myself, but I could also say the same for (Maurizio) Ganz. It's sad to see him trying to get into the thick of the action and not managing it."

"He's always been a goalscorer, but how can he get any goals if he only touches the ball three or four times in a game?"

Weah stressed he had nothing against Bierhoff, who was the Serie A's top scorer last season for Lazio when the two men were at Udinese.

"Oliver deserves to play in the middle, but if there's no room for me next to him it's better that I go on the substitutes' bench," Weah said. "That way, someone who is of more use to the team can take my place."

Since Milan have no players in the current squad who were born for that role, Weah said: "They will have to buy them, or the team will have to change the way they play."

"I seem to be doing the team more harm than good, because I'm in a position which I can't play in. It's like asking (Paolo) Maldini to be a centre forward," he told Tuttosport.

Weah has frequently been linked with a move to Arsenal, whose French coach Arsene Wenger launched the Librarian's career at Monaco. Those reports resurfaced again in the Italian press on Tuesday.

Arbitrator rejects NBA union bid for salary payments

NEW YORK (AFP) — National Basketball Association owners will not have to pay 226 locked out players with guaranteed contracts a total of nearly \$800 million in salaries, an arbitrator ruled Monday.

John Feerick's decision on the players' union grievance came on the 11th day of the labor feud. It gave a triumph to owners who, if appeals had failed, might have been under greater pressure to end the lockout.

Billy Hunter, executive director of the union, said the reality that superstar players will not get their millions will not send players scurrying to reach an agreement more quickly than before.

"I'm not at all concerned," he said. "There has been no demonstration that there is going to be a change in our resolve."

The ruling might push some affected players into making deals to play the upcoming season in Europe. New Jersey center Ronny Seikaly is looking into possible deals in Greece, for example.

The NBA season, which

had been planned to start in two weeks, has seen its first two weeks, 99 games, canceled — the first games in NBA history wiped out by a work stoppage.

Owners next week expect to consider wiping out more games. Talks could not begin before next Monday as union representatives plan to meet in Las Vegas later this week.

About one month will be needed from the time a deal is struck to re-start the season, allowing sufficient time for free agency and training camps.

On hold until a labor deal is reached are such issues as the "playing future" of Michael Jordan and the exact roster for the reigning champion but free agent dominated Chicago Bulls.

Union leaders had contended NBA owners were liable for guaranteed contracts because they were locking out players. Feerick disagreed only after taking the maximum 30 days of consideration to render a finding.

NBA owners locked out players July 1 saying several teams could not afford to

open the season without a firm salary cap. Players want to keep an exception that allows clubs to sign their free agents over cap limits.

When Major League Baseball owners and players had a similar squabble over how to divide their \$2 billion industry in 1994 it took a judge's ruling to force a return to work under existing rules until talks on a new deal were completed. The labor fight could not come at a worse time for basketball shoemakers who are already cutting back on star endorsement deals as footwear sales drop dramatically.

Sales of running shoes with lower prices are rising as fast as sales of NBA-style sneakers are dropping, about 11 percent in each case of the \$1.1 billion global market.

Hardest hit of the shoemakers by the NBA shut-down and resulting backlash is likely to be Nike, supplier of shoes to 65 percent of NBA players.



One of the world's leading women tennis players, Russia's Anna Kurnikova gives expert guidance to a young girl during a master-class held in Moscow on the eve of the Kremlin Cup tennis tournament. The prize fund of the Kremlin Cup is \$1,000,000 this year and has attracted such names as Venus Williams, Monica Seles, Conchita Martinez, Natalie Tauziat and Patty Schnyder (AFP Photo).

Moroccan stars suspended

JOHANNESBURG

(AFP) — Mustapha Khalif and Noureddine Ziyati of Raja Casablanca have been banned from two African Champions League matches after manhandling a referee in Tanzania.

African Football Confederation (CAF) spokesman Dr Viken Djizmedjian said Khalif repeatedly pushed Ghanaian Alex Quartey and Ziyati spat at him following a 3-3 draw with Young Africans.

CAF could take further action against the Moroccans, who were angered by a controversial Tanzanian goal, when the competition committee meets in Egypt during December.

Champions League title holders Raja will also be without star striker Reda Erriyahi for the crucial Group B clash with leaders ASEC in Ivory Coast on Sunday.

Erriyahi, who struck six goals in home and away matches against Young Africans, is serving an automatic one-match ban after being cautioned twice in previous rounds.

Raja trail ASEC by five points entering the penultimate round and must win to keep alive their hopes of becoming the first African champions since 1968 to successfully defend the title.

Moya, Sanchez top seeds in Hopman Cup

PERTH (AFP) — Carlos Moya and Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario of Spain have been made number one seeds for the AS900,000 (\$569,000) Hopman Cup mixed team tournament here in January.

Moya and Sanchez will be aiming to topple defending champions, Karol Kucera and Karina Habsudova, of the Slovak Republic, when the 11-year-old event starts at Burswood Dome on January 2.

Kucera and Habsudova have been seeded num-

ber three behind the U.S. team of Jan-Michael Gambill and Lindsay Davenport.

Spain won the second Hopman Cup in January 1990 when Emilio Sanchez and Sanchez beat the US pair of John McEnroe and Pam Shriver in the final.

Draw (x denotes seed)

Group A: Spain (x1) Carlos Moya/Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario. South Africa (x4) Wayne Ferreira/Amanda Coetzer. Unseeded: Australia, Mark Philippoussis/Ielena

France, Guillaume Raoux/Sandrine Testud, or Zimbabwe, Wayne Black/Cara Black. France-Zimbabwe to play off in preliminary match.

Group B: United States (x2), Jan-Michael Gambill/Lindsay Davenport. Slovak Republic (x3) Karol Kucera/Karina Habsudova. Unseeded: Sweden, Jonas Bjorkman/Asa Carlsson. Switzerland, Ivo Heuberger/Martina Hingis.

Siemerink out as Pioline advances in Lyon

LYON (AFP) — Italian claycourt specialist Gianluca Pozzi upset fifth-seeded Jan Siemerink of the Netherlands 2-6, 6-4, 6-4 on Monday in the first round of the \$725,000 Lyon Grand Prix ATP Tour event.

Siemerink, winner of the recent Toulouse Open, cruised through the first set before Pozzi, ranked 58th in the world — 43 places below Siemerink — lifted his service percentage and kept his opponent under pressure with a series of fine forehand returns.

In another surprise, Frenchman Arnaud Di Pasquale beat sixth-seeded Spaniard Albert Costa 7-5, 6-3.

In other first-round matches, France's Nicolas Escude beat Spain's Juan Antonio Marin 6-0, 6-4, and Germany's Tommy Haas defeated Arnaud Clement of France 6-2, 6-7 (7-9), 6-4 and seventh-seeded Frenchman Cedric Pioline advanced with a 6-7 (4/7), 6-4, 6-1 win over his compatriot Sebastien Grosjean.

In matches scheduled for Tuesday, World No. 1 Pete Sampras, fresh from his fourth tournament victory of the year in Vienna, plays fellow American Todd Martin, second-seeded Patrick Rafter of Australia meets American Steve Campbell and number three Marcelo Rios of Chile meets American Jeff Tarango.

CINEMA	TEL: 5699238		TEL: 5677420		TEL: 5934793		TEL: 5934793	
	PHILADELPHIA '1'	PHILADELPHIA '2'	PLAZA	CONCORD	GALLERIA 1	GALLERIA 2	Hisham Yanes Theatre	TEL: 4625155
TODAY AT	Nathan Lane & Lee Evans .. in MOUSE HUNT Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	George Clooney & Nicole Kidman .. in THE PEACE MAKER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Comedian Mohammad Huneidi .. in SAEEDI AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	CONCORD "1" Michael Douglas & Sean Penn .. in THE GAME Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30 CONCORD "2" Robert Redford .. in UP CLOSE & PERSONAL Shows: 3:30, 5:30 only	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria Comedian Mohammad Huneidi .. in SAEEDI AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria Comedian Mohammad Huneidi .. in SAEEDI AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:15, 10:30	Watch out for the new play	

Sports

1st Asian League Champions Handball Tournament Jordan's Al Ahli lose opening match

By Roufan Nahhas

AMMAN — Thrill and tears commanded the atmosphere at the opening match between Jordan's Al Ahli and Qatar's Al Rayyan at the 1st Asian League Handball Tournament got underway Tuesday at the Sports Palace.

Although they got off to an exciting start, Al Ahli lost their first match 33-25 (14-15).

Al Ahli opened the score by Muhammad Al Mansi but Al Rayyan moved faster and captured an early tie from a penalty kick.

The Jordanians kept up the pressure on their rivals whose sudden attacks confused Al Ahli's defence.

Al Ahli tried to open

more chances depending on Mouaffaq Fathallah and the experienced Iqbal Bani Hani but the concerted attacks of the Qataris set the pace.

Al Ahli failed to take advantage of the absence of Al Rayyan's Ahmed Mouti as the referee sent him off for rough play.

Ten minutes towards the end of the first half Al Ahli were able to tie 11-11.

Al Rayyan felt the heat but Al Ahli continued with their successful strategy of closely watching Al Rayyan's professional players Shams Al Mursi and Sameh Abdul Wareh of Egypt to end the first half with a 15-14 lead.

Al Ahli started the second half with an eagerness to win their first encounter, but luck

seemed to abandon them as they lost many chances to take the lead.

Al Rayyan took advantage of the absence of Al Ahli's players who were sent out, and took control of the remaining minutes of the match depending on two key players Al Mursi and Abdul Wareh to end the match with a 33-25 win.

Jordan's Al Ahli will play Iran's Zohoban Wednesday.

Only five teams are taking part in the Oct. 20-27 event after China's Army team and UAE's Al Shams declined. The competing teams are Jordan's Al Ahli and Al Ahli, Iran's Zohoban Asfahan, Qatar's Al Rayyan and Kuwait's Kallima.



Tottenham Hotspur's captain Sol Campbell (R) tries to avoid bringing Leicester City's Tony Cottee (C) down in the penalty area during their Carling Premiership clash. Leicester won 2-1 (AFP photo)

Zidane's future uncertain

MILAN (AFP) — Juventus have taken an option on Sampdoria playmaker Ariel Ortega for next season, raising further speculation over Zinedine Zidane's future with the Italian champions.

Juventus are negotiating the sale of reserve midfielder Fabio Pecchia to the struggling Genoa club, who have let in nine goals in their last two away games.

But Juventus added a surprise option on Ortega into the talks during a meeting in Turin with Sampdoria sporting director Domenico Amoruso on Monday night, Tuttosport reported.

The Argentinian, who had a good World Cup, has made a fine start to his Serie A career despite the club's continuing plunge down the table.

Ortega, voted seven out of 10 by the Italian press in Sunday's 4-1 defeat to Piacenza, has the same playmaking role behind two strikers as World Cup hero Zidane, who revealed last week that he might be with Juventus next season.

The Frenchman filed a broadside at unidentified club officials and said he would not be honouring his contract there which expires in 2003.

Crucial time for United and Juventus in European Cup

PARIS (AFP) — Both sides were expected to have a major say in the destination of this year's European Cup — but the hopes of Manchester United and Juventus hang by a thread going in to Wednesday's programme.

United certainly looked the part in the league at the weekend, thrashing Wimbledon 5-1 to go second in the English Premiership. And the Red Devils might have been tempted to regard upcoming opponents Brondby as a Danish equivalent of the Dons.

But things are not quite working out as expected in the Group of Death and the United camp know all about Brondby's capabilities following the Scandinavians' shock opening win over Bayern Munich.

United let slip a two-goal lead in their opening match against Barcelona at Old Trafford and then suffered a late Bayern late equaliser in Munich last month to leave themselves with work to do.

However, they do have a spy with knowledge of the Danish camp as 'keeper Peter Schmeichel used to play for Brondby.

The blond giant has been out for three weeks with a stomach muscle strain but said Monday he was ready to play.

"I trained on Sunday and I feel fine. I am 100 per cent sure that I will be in goal on Wednesday," said the 34-year-old Dane.

United will still have to rotate their huge squad as England men Nicky Butt and David Beckham are suspended. Denis Irwin is doubtful with a heel injury and Ronny Johnsen is ruled out with an ankle ligament problem.

The importance of three points cannot be underestimated for United, who have been chasing the trophy for 30 years, because if Barcelona fail to win in Munich Alex Ferguson's men will go top.

Barcelona are without ineligible Dutch forward Patrick Kluyvert, whose place goes to Mario Alberto Rojas. Bayern hope Markus Babel and Thomas Helmer can shake off injuries to make the starting line-up and bolster a defence that will be lacking the suspended Lothar Matthaus.

Juventus, beaten in the last two finals, travel to play Athletic Bilbao looking for their own first win. And the San Mames stadium, with its ear-shattering noise levels, will not be an easy place to get it in front of 40,000 fiercely-pitched Basque fans.

Juve striker Alessandro Del Piero admits that win-or-bust time has arrived after draws against Galatasaray and Rosenborg.

"This match is going to be virtually a decider. It's not quite a question of either being in or out of the competition — but almost," Del Piero warned his teammates.

Coach Marcello Lippi also made it clear that with only two points on the board, this was no time to look for a calculated draw.

"We're going to Bilbao and we'll be going there to win," he said.

Wednesday's game will be a special one for France's World Cup-winning captain Didier Deschamps, a Basque from Bayonne.

"We absolutely have to win this one if we are going to get anywhere in the Champions League," he said.

Bilbao coach Luis Fernandez promises his men will attack as they have nothing to lose following defeat at Galatasaray.

Defender Rafael Alkorta and midfielders Binor Alkiza and Josu Urrutia all return to the squad following injury.

Reigning champions Real Madrid, stunned by a loss at Spartak Moscow which virtually negated the good work of their opening win over Inter Milan, face Group C tailenders Sturm Graz of Austria.

The Spaniards must now come from behind as Spartak are looking good after two wins in two games.

Real will face the Austrians without Fernando Redondo and Christian Panucci, missing with thigh and knee injuries. But Croatian midfielder Robert Jarni is fit for the Spanish league leaders.

Inter Milan, meanwhile, hope to welcome back Brazilian ace Ronaldo, out for a month with knee problems, to face Spartak at San Siro.

"I am in the squad — so it's possible I'll play. I feel much better now but I don't know if I'll last the 90 minutes," the Brazilian sharpshooter said.

Inter will be without Roberto Baggio, who has yet to recover from knee tendon trouble of his own.

Arsenal continue their Group E campaign against Dynamo Kiev at Wembley but will do so without French midfielder Patrick Vieira, who is suspended after two bookings.

Compatriot Emmanuel Petit will almost certainly have to sit it out owing to a hamstring injury he collected playing for France in Russia last week.

Stephen Hughes is likely to deputise for Petit and Remi Garde could come in for Vieira.

Despite forming the backbone of the Ukrainian national team, going well in the Euro-2000 qualifiers, Dynamo

have not proved so dynamic thus far, losing at Panathinaikos of Greece and then drawing at home to French champions Lens.

In contrast, the Gunners' win over Panathinaikos has put them in the driving seat.

Dynamo's head coach Valery Lobanovsky celebrated his 30th anniversary as a football coach on Friday and his squad wants to give him something to celebrate at Wembley.

In other matches, Galatasaray will attempt to steal a march on Juventus in Group B by beating newly-crowned Norwegian champions Rosenborg in Norway.

The Turks are sweating on the fitness of Romanian playmaker Gheorghe Hagi, while defender Julian Filipescu is suspended along with midfielder Kerimoglu Tugay.

Four-times champions Ajax have injury problems aplenty before hosting Olympiakos of Greece in Group A with skipper Danny Blind still getting over a knee injury.

Finnish striker Jari Litmanen has a strained left ankle, Nigerian midfielder Sunday Oliseh a back injury and striker Peter Hoekstra a thigh strain. Ronald de Boer is another doubt with a knee problem as is his twin brother Frank, who has a wrist strain.

The two sides are level on points and the winner will have one foot in the next round with Porto and Croatia Zagreb, who meet in Portugal, currently lagging well behind.

Group F leaders and German champions Kaiserslautern travel to Holland's PSV Eindhoven, who won the trophy a decade ago.

PSV, coached by former England boss Bobby Robson, lost at Benfica in their last tie and have selection problems as defenders Stan Valckx and Emese Faber, as well as Romanian midfielder Ovidiu Stinga, are out with injury and defender Andre Ooijer is doubtful.

Brazilian defender Joaquim "Marcos" Dos Santos and Portuguese Abel Xavier are suspended.

Kaiserslautern, the only unbeaten side in the group, are, like PSV, hoping to overturn poor league form.

Graeme Souness' Benfica, meanwhile, travel to winless outsiders Helsinki.

Korda out of Czech Indoors

OSTRAVA (AFP) — Russian teenager Murat Safin scored an upset 6-4, 6-2 win over top-seeded Petr Korda in the opening round of the \$975,000 Czech Indoor championships here on Monday.

The loss in front of his local fans continued a recent slump by Australian Open champion Korda.

Spanish-based Safin, just 18, has continually impressed this year, reaching the last 16 at both the French Open — where he knocked out Andre Agassi and defending champion Gustavo Kuerten — and the U.S. Open.

Those fine runs took the tall, powerful right-hander racing up the rankings to his current 56th.

The Czech fans offered further disappointment when Zimbabwe's Wayne Black beat another home hope Radek Stepanek 6-3, 6-3.

Seventh seed Thomas Enqvist of Sweden moved through in three sets against Dutchman Paul Haarhuis and eighth seed Thomas Johansson, another Swede, knocked out Andrew Ilie of Australia 6-4, 6-4.

FedEx golf tourney to be held Friday

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Bisharat Golf Course will once again be the venue for the annual FedEx Golf Tournament which will be held on Oct. 23 starting at 9 a.m.

Over 40 of the leading golfers in Amman, both Jordanians and expatriates from the business,

government and diplomatic sectors will be participating.

HRH Prince Faisal will distribute trophies and prizes to the winners of the event which is expected to conclude at around 1:30 p.m.

New York Jets fly over Patriots

FOXBORO, Massachusetts (AFP) — Vinny Testaverde threw for 294 yards and three touchdowns, leading the New York Jets to a 24-14 American football victory over the New England Patriots here Monday.

The National Football League triumph lifted the Jets to 3-3, one game the pace-setting Patriots (4-2) in the AFC East division.

Testaverde completed 22 of 32 throws and marched the Jets 80 yards in 8:35 for the go-ahead touchdown in the fourth quarter.

"We played great. Our

defence played really good and Curtis Martin ran well," Testaverde said. "We knew if we played without too many mistakes we could win."

The victory was especially satisfying for Jets coach Bill Parcells, who coached the Patriots to the Super Bowl but left in a feud with owners, taking with him Martin and several assistants two years ago.

"The coaches were mad in practice all week," Testaverde said. "I think coach Parcells is really happy right now."

Poles keep Parma at bay in UEFA Cup

KRAKOW, Poland (AFP) — Poland's Wisla Krakow held Italian favourites Parma to a 1-1 draw here on Tuesday in a muddy second round UEFA Cup tie.

Enrico Chiesa nodded Parma into the lead after just two minutes, but Tomasz Kulawik cracked home an equaliser midway through the second half to give the Poles hope for the second leg in a fortnight's time.

Parma coach Alberto Malesani said: "We certainly tried to get a winner. We went close and their goalkeeper made a couple of good saves. But I'm happy."

"We'll obviously have to be fully concentrated when we play them again, but this is still a very positive result."

Parma made a dream start when Argentinian Juan Sebastian Veron curled over a corner from the left and Chiesa beat Polish keeper Artur Sanjat with a glancing header.

But the Polish league leaders were both confident and creative moving forward, with Kulawik soon forcing a save at full stretch from Gianluigi Buffon, whose fingertips were then just enough to push Tomasz Frankowski's cannon shot onto the crossbar and away from 10 yards.

Grzegorz Patern was the next to try his luck with a barrelling drive after Parma cleared a corner from the left.

However, the visitors should have been 2-0 up at the break after midfielder Diego Fuser was put clean through but sent his shot straight at the Polish keeper.

Krakow kept up the pressure after the re-start and were finally rewarded in the 67th minute, when Patern broke down the night before crossing into the area, Frankowski nodded the ball back and Kulawik slammed it home.

Parma continued to live dangerously as the Poles drove forward on the muddy pitch, but substitute Abel Balbo also kept the Krakow keeper on his toes with three searching shots on target.

The Argentinian was denied a certain winner five minutes from time when French defender Lilian Thuram got behind the Polish defence and only the keeper's near-post interception denied Balbo an open goal from one yard.

Parma's last chance fell to Thuram, who ran with the ball from virtually one penalty area to the other before completely his skying shot.

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21 Jordanians visit family members imprisoned in Israel

By Francesca Ciriaci

AMMAN — Twenty-one family members of 12 Jordanian prisoners in Israel on Tuesday visited their relatives in the first such collective visit granted by Israeli authorities.

Jordan's Ambassador to Tel Aviv Omar Rifat told the Jordan Times in a recent telephone interview that the visit was made possible by high-level Jordanian efforts.

Eyewitnesses said the relatives, mostly women, crossed the King Hussein Bridge in the early morning Tuesday visibly moved, expressing gratitude to His Majesty King Hussein and Crown Prince Hassan, the

Regent.

All 14 Jordanian prisoners detained in Israel on security-related charges were allowed to receive two family members.

However, one of the families could not be located, while another declined to visit now and asked to be allowed to visit their imprisoned relative during the Holy Month of Ramadan, instead, an official from the Jordanian embassy in Tel Aviv was quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, as saying.

Petra quoted Ahmad Ayasrah, assistant to the Jordanian Consul in Tel Aviv, as saying the 12 prisoners who received their

relatives were previously held in two jails in Shata and Nafha, but they were all transferred to the Ashkelon Prison, in southern Israel, upon a request from Jordanian authorities.

Israel freed most Jordanian prisoners in its jails more than one year ago in exchange for two Mossad agents who attempted to assassinate Khaled Misbaal, a senior member of the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas.

However, in addition to the 14 Jordanians imprisoned on security charges, there are six more Jordanians held in Israel for criminal offences, sources said.



The mother of Jamal Mekahel, a Jordanian prisoner jailed in Israel, holds his picture as she crosses King Hussein Bridge to the West Bank on Tuesday. Relatives of 14 Jordanians being held in Israeli jails were making their first trip to Israel on Tuesday to visit the detainees (Reuters photo)

Boxers banned from tournament over beards

KARACHI (AFP) — Three Afghan boxers have been barred from an international contest opening here Tuesday because the tournament rules do not allow bearded boxers in the ring. The three boxers were informed they could not compete unless they shaved off their beards. They refused. Sources close to the Afghan boxers said that if they removed their beards the Taliban government in Kabul would not let them re-enter their country.

Man holds up pharmacy demanding Viagra

ROHR (AFP) — A 47-year-old man held up a pharmacy in this southern German town and demanded a supply of the anti-impotence drug Viagra, police said Tuesday. The man, wearing a motorcycle helmet, threatened the pharmacist with a pistol when she told him she did not stock the little blue pills. The man, who is being questioned by police, instead made off with the \$185 contents of the pharmacy till. Viagra is only available on a doctor's prescription in Germany.

Three accused of bizarre plot go on trial

BROWNSVILLE (R) — Three alleged Texas separatists went on trial, accused of cooking up a bizarre plot to use cactus thorns tainted with the AIDS virus to kill President Bill Clinton and other government officials. John Wise, 72; Oliver Emigh, 63; and Jack Grebe, 43, were arrested in the small southern Texas town of Olmito in July and charged with conspiring to use weapons against Clinton and other government officials. U.S. Assistant Attorney Mervyn Mosbacher told jurors the three men belonged to the Republic of Texas Movement, a radical separatist group with links to anti-government militias.

Bjork performs in Lars Von Trier film

COPENHAGEN (AFP) — The Icelandic singer Bjork will perform in Danish filmmaker Lars Von Trier's next production "Dancer in the Dark," she disclosed in an interview in the ExtraBladet tabloid on Tuesday. "Dancer in the Dark" is a kind of filmed musical, explained the singer. "I'm not claiming to have become an actress all of a sudden. I am: Bjork," she said in a telephone interview from her Icelandic country home. "I said yes to Lars, and unless I have an accident, become a communist or emigrate to China, I'll be playing in that film," she added.

'Acupuncture originated in central Europe'

VIENNA (R) — Tattoos found on a 5,200-year-old Alpine mummy are evidence that Europeans practised acupuncture some 2,000 years before the Chinese, scientists said in Vienna. The tattoos on the Tyrolean neolithic man were not intended to impress the opposite sex but may have formed an ancient acupuncture chart used long before the therapy was developed in the Far East, they said. "It looks like an early form of acupuncture originated in central Europe," said Frank Bahr, president of the German Academy for Acupuncture, who was in Vienna to present the results of a study into the tattoos.

Palestinian behind Beersheba attack had house razed

HEBRON (AFP) — The Palestinian accused of carrying out a grenade attack which left 64 Israelis wounded is a father of five whose home was razed by the Israeli army when he was a teenager, his brother said Tuesday.

Salem Sarsur, a 28-year-old construction worker, was arrested by Israeli police following Monday's grenade attack in the main bus station in Beersheba, a town in southern Israel, according to Palestinian press reports.

He is accused of hurling two hand grenades into a rush hour crowd at the station, wounding 64 people including around 20 Israeli soldiers.

Twenty-six of the injured

remained hospitalised on Tuesday including one person in critical condition and two in serious condition, Beersheba hospital officials said.

The attack prompted Israel to suspend all negotiations at the peace summit outside Washington, which entered an unscheduled sixth day Tuesday, except on steps it wants the Palestinians to take to crack down on terrorism.

Salem's brother, Jamal, told AFP his family doubted, however, that Salem was behind the Beersheba attack.

"We saw him leave for work yesterday morning," he said. "Since then, nobody has informed us of anything officially. We've

only heard of the charges against him from journalists."

Jamal described his brother as a "religious" man and said he was not a member of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) or any other group hacking armed struggle against Israel.

"He's a religious man who does not have links with any organisation," he said.

Jamal said Salem had been arrested once previously by the Israeli army. In 1992, during the intifada, for throwing stones. He was held for seven months.

Jamal said the Israeli army had destroyed the family home in 1983 for "security reasons" but declined to elaborate.

The Sarsur family current-

ly lives in an area of divided Hebron under the control of the Palestinian National Authority of Yasser Arafat.

The Palestinian newspaper Al Ayyam said a portrait of Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, the spiritual leader of Hamas, is displayed on a wall of the family home and published a photo of Salem wearing a beard and white skullcap favoured by devout Muslims.

Salem's wife, Khulud, said she would be proud if her husband was indeed behind the attack. "If it's him I thank God for a husband who is a warrior of the faith," she told Al Ayyam.

Israeli police have declined to release the identity of the assailant, who was arrested at the scene of

the blasts, and a Beersheba court has imposed a total blackout on the investigation.

Israeli police sources initially said the assailant was a Palestinian from a village south of Hebron under Israeli security control, but Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said later that he was from a self-rule area of Hebron.

No group has claimed responsibility for the attack but Sheikh Yassin said such attacks were justified so long as "occupation and oppression of the Palestinians continues."

The military wing of Hamas has claimed responsibility for most anti-Israeli attacks in recent years.

Iraq gets U.N. nod for more oil contracts

BAGHDAD (AFP) — The United Nations has approved 14 more contracts for repairs to Iraq's battered oil industry, raising the total value of contracts for spare parts to \$62 million, a U.N. spokesman said Tuesday.

The Middle East Economic Survey (MEES), meanwhile, warned that Iraqi oilfields and the quality of crude could suffer permanent damage because of the desperate efforts of sanctions-hit Baghdad to boost exports.

U.N. spokesman John Mills, in a statement distributed in Baghdad, said the Sanctions Committee has so far approved 56 contracts while 61 others, with a total value of \$40 million, were put on hold.

The United Nations authorised Iraq in June to import up to \$300 million worth of spare parts to rehabilitate its oil sector, which was damaged in the 1991 Gulf war and has been run down by eight years of sanctions.

Oil Minister Amer Mohammad Rashid on Tuesday accused the United States of blocking Baghdad's contracts to cause long-term damage to the Iraqi oil infrastructure.

"Of course we are producing as much as possible from our oilfields, but this has a long-term effect of deterioration of our reservoir in a way detrimental to our oil infrastructure," Rashid said.

"We think one of the reasons why the U.S. representative within the Sanctions Committee is putting up obstacles is to inflict damage to our oil industry," he told reporters.

"Definitely, there is damage being created," the minister said.

Rashid said Iraq's exports were nearing 1.85 million barrels a day, "which means around 2.55 and 2.6 million bar-

King, Clinton push for deal at Middle East talks

(Continued from page 1)

Arafat rejected that approach. Palestine Minister Yasser Arafat told reporters: "My fear is that there are gains being made now to lead us to a partial accord. We will reject a partial agreement." U.S. officials said although there was a new seriousness about the discussions, they remained cautious and did not rule out a partial deal being the best they could achieve.

"It's certainly better than it's been before but it's by no means enough to close," one official said.

One of the key issues at the talks is a package of measures by which Palestinian authorities will prevent attacks against Israelis by Palestinian militants. The Israelis demand this before going ahead with a second pullback in the West Bank.

A Palestinian delegate said the Israelis showed "some understanding" for a security plan the Palestinians have submitted. "But they have to sit down further," he added.

An Israeli official said of the plan: "The issues are not closed. There are still issues that are unacceptable to us. (Clinton) heard our demands."

The Israelis are demanding the Palestinians dismantle the infrastructure of the Islamist movement Hamas, the armed wing of which claimed responsibility for Monday's grenade attack.

But Arafat has refused to do this, arguing that the Hamas infrastructure includes educational and charitable institutes and that the movement also operates in Israel and Jordan.

The fall-back "partial agreement" Israel has

offered would leave out the most contentious points, such as the extent and timing of a third Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank. Israel has withdrawn from most of the Gaza Strip and most West Bank towns since the Oslo agreement of 1993. The Palestinians have partial control in parts of the countryside.

The Israelis also want to delay decisions on safe passage for Palestinians between Gaza and the West Bank and on "unilateral acts," political code for Israel's settlement policy and Palestinian plans to declare a state.

The Palestinians have repeatedly rejected the idea of a partial agreement, saying they must get commitments now.

Sources close to the talks said there had been some movement on the issue of Palestinians implicated in attacks on Israelis being transferred to Israel and on a third-stage Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank.

But they said the Israelis were refusing to drop their demand that the 700-member Palestine National Council be convened to change a Palestinian Charter calling for Israel's destruction, which Arafat opposes.

Clinton met Arafat and Netanyahu for 2-1/2 hours on Monday evening then held a working dinner joined by other members of Netanyahu's cabinet, including hawkish retired general Ariel Sharon, who became Israel's foreign minister this month.

Some U.S. officials said they expected talks to continue into Wednesday and, if they succeeded, a signing ceremony might take place on Thursday at the White House. But they cautioned this was only a very tentative plan.

Israeli medical team barred from conference in Qatar

DOHA (AP) — Israeli doctors have been barred from participating in a medical conference to be held in this Gulf sultanate in December, an organiser said Tuesday.

A team of three Israeli doctors had expressed interest in attending the conference of bone specialists but was rejected, said Nasser Abdullah Al Subeie, the conference organiser.

"We refused to allow them into Qatar and refused to have them participate in the conference," said Al Subeie.

He did not give a reason but

the decision was apparently political.

Qatar froze fledgling relations with Israel because of stalled peace talks and has not accepted any Israeli delegations since an economic conference last November.

More than 150 bone specialists will participate in the 6th Gulf Cooperation Council Orthopaedic Association Conference from Dec. 5 to 8, including 12 doctors from Iraq, Al Subeie said.

Qatar has no diplomatic relations with Israel, but established trade ties with the

Jewish state in 1995 after historic peace accords between Israel and the Palestinians in 1993.

Israel established a trade office in Doha but plans for a Qatari trade mission in Israel were scrapped when hard-line Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu took power in 1996 and reneged on the peace agreements with the Palestinians made by his predecessors.

Qatar says relations with Israel will remain frozen until there is progress in peace talks with the Palestinians.

Syria says making peace with Israel's Netanyahu impossible

DAMASCUS (R) — An official Syrian newspaper said on Tuesday that making peace with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was impossible and criticised Palestinians for joining summit talks in the United States.

"Events during the last 30 months of Netanyahu's rule show that he [Netanyahu] is totally opposed to peace and it was impossible to reach any agreement with him which is based on U.N. resolutions," Al Baath daily newspaper said.

The Palestinian-Israeli summit, at Wye Plantation near

Washington, was extended for a sixth day on Tuesday with U.S. President Bill Clinton intensifying efforts to reach an elusive interim land-and-security agreement between the right-wing Netanyahu and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

"What Netanyahu wants is total Arab capitulation to his demands and that Arabs should serve his entity, protect his settlers and preserve Israel's interests and expansionist schemes," Al Baath said in a front-page commentary.

Syria has long championed

the Palestinian drive for statehood and an end to Israel's occupation of Arab land, including Syria's Golan Heights, seized in 1967.

"Continuation of negotiations with Netanyahu by any Arab party will lead to nothing but harm the interests of this Arab party in particular and harm the security of the Arab Nation in general," it added.

The newspaper also criticised the role of the United States, saying Washington was openly biased in Israel's favour.

9 officials referred to court in connection with water pollution crisis

(Continued from page 1)

The list of charges also accused the nine Water Authority officials of producing and selling water that is not potable and does not fit Jordanian standards and specifications. Two are accused of forgery, with Saed Bakri, assistant to Water Authority Secretary General, facing charges of negligence.

The nine Water Authority officials to be tried for negligence are: Water Authority Secretary General Munther Khleifat, technical assistant to

the authority's Secretary General Samir Hejazin, head of the authority's central laboratories Hassan Amr, director of the Zai plant Mohammad Abu Taha, head of water treatment and operation at the plant Read Muhlen, plant maintenance department head Muntaser Hikmat, head of the authority's quality control department Ahmad Oleimat, plant head of shifts Fawaz Radwan and Salt lab health expert Mohammad Ghannam. The last two will also face the charge of forgery.

"It was proved during the investigation that there was negligence on behalf of the ministers of water who held the post since the treaty was signed in 1994 and until the crisis started in 1998," Harahsheh's report, published in Al Dustour daily, said.

According to the report, the three ministers are Saleh Irshaidat, Samir Kavar and Munther Haddadin. "After pumping from Tiberias to Zai plant started, a change to the quality of water occurred and it was proven that it carried high levels of organic substances that exceeded those in other sources of supplies feeding the station

which was not able to handle. However, and despite the critical nature of this situation, none of their excellencies the ministers showed any interest or concern," it added.

Harahsheh's probe concluded that the following reasons were behind the water problem:

— The plant did not hire among its staff a specialised micro-biological technician.

— The authorities failed to put the right person in the right place, which was evidenced in the appointment of a water resources engineer, Abu Taha, to direct the plant, instead of hiring a chemical engineer. Also employing a mechanical engineer, Munther Khleifat, as water authority secretary general.

— The lack of advanced laboratories that could detect any source of pollution.

— The negligence in maintaining the plant's filtering system.

— The absence of coordination and cooperation between the plant staff and the central laboratories and quality department of the Water Authority and the Ministry of Health and Medical Care.